

SKETCHES OF GREAT TRUTHS

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FOREWORD

THE essays which make up this booklet appeared originally in the Supplement of *New India*, and were intended for the casual reader, with the hope that they might capture his attention, and lure him in the direction of fuller and deeper knowledge. Many of us, after groping for years after answers to the riddles perpetually presented to us by the Sphinx, found the answers in the Light of the Ancient Wisdom, and have ever since followed it with ever-increasing peace of heart and satisfaction of intellect. The world of to-day would scarcely be tolerable, were it not that Theosophy has taught us to pierce through the clouds that veil the heavens and to see shining there the Star in the East, the Morning Star. That others may find that peace, that satisfaction, is our ever-present wish, and every word that may carry these to some restless soul goes out into the world on the wings of our hope that the joyous message may be to all who hear it what it has been to us.

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CHAPTER I

PRACTICAL THEOSOPHY

THE word Theosophy is broadly speaking known all the world over. One now comes across the word and its influence in all sorts of unexpected places, whereas forty or fifty years ago it was practically unknown except to the few. It is written about now in the rather stiff magazine which prides itself on its literary superiority as well as in the cheap novel whose author caters for the "gallery". Moreover on the lips of very many is the question "what is Theosophy"? Some ask this out of curiosity, some rather disdainfully, when possibly they insert the word "this," thus asking what is *this* Theosophy; and again, there are those who ask because they want to learn and to understand more of what it means. It is for the sake of these last that it has been suggested that a reply should be sent to them in the shape of a few short articles week by week in *New India*. It is a very remarkable and significant fact that should anyone

hear of Theosophy he does not forget it; the name sticks in his memory, to put it crudely. It is as if a tiny fire-fly had flown across and shown her light, and the remembrance of that tiny spark comes back again and again to him that caught its glint and he cannot forget it. It matters not if he disagrees with his slight knowledge of it, still he seems obliged to nibble at it almost against his will, and is impelled to seek to know more.

In these short articles it is of course only possible to treat this big subject in a very elementary and somewhat sketchy way, but to the seeker they may be of use in arousing him to further study of the subject, by reading, by thinking and by meditation. "Theosophy is Divine Wisdom, and this Wisdom is the Light which lighteth every man who cometh into the world." This is the secret why the light once seen can never quite go out, for that which is Divine cannot die.

I was asked not long ago to give a lecture on practical Theosophy, and in order to do so I found myself staying in a large old-fashioned house which possessed an ancient library full of treasures. I do not know what prompted me to do it, but I was thinking of my coming lecture and, seeing a row of rare old dictionaries before

me, I thought I would look up the meaning of the word Theosophy, for from the practical side the word Divine Wisdom did not quite satisfy me. I got my answer for I found that Theosophy meant "Wise in the things of God"; this answer was very illuminating and helpful to me and I pass it on to you. It carried me back to my childhood when I had pondered long and deeply on the meaning of the creation; for I was asked to take literally the story so beautifully related in the first chapter of Genesis. We are told there of the different "days" on which God created the light, when He divided the water above the firmament from the water below the firmament, and made dry land appear, and then followed the creation of the herbs and fruits and seeds, and the sun to rule by day, and then all the moving creatures and the birds and cattle; and after each "day's" work God saw that "it was good," and lastly He created man, "male and female created He them" and God blessed them and gave everything that He had created into the charge of man. Then we are told that God once more looked at everything that He had made and "behold it was very good". When I realised that Theosophy meant wise in the things of God, I naturally asked myself what are God's things and where are they?

and the answer is given by that short sketch of the beautiful story of the Creation. *Every thing* is God's *thing*, belongs to Him and is in His plan of the making of the World. We are put in charge of His things. You may think that the story is a legend, an allegory or a parable. Yes, that may be so, but a legend is always founded on a truth, an allegory and a parable veil a truth, and behind this story is the truth of evolution and God's plan is evolution. To-day I want to take specially the practical side of Theosophy, next week I will talk a little further of God's plan. Every one of God's things was put into man's charge, and we have replied to what are God's things. If we seek to be wise in these things, then we shall seek to understand our charge, and try to fall in with God's plan and work with Him. "My son get wisdom and with all thy getting, get understanding" was said by Solomon the Wise—and here we have a vicious circle, for we must understand to enable us to become wise and we must be wise in our understanding. We cannot become wise unless we understand, neither can we understand unless we become wise. The secret is this, in looking after God's things we either work as faithful stewards looking after them as His things or we are faithless and try to get

possession of His things for ourselves. In the first, we work with Him in His Plan, and in the last we work against Him and against His Plan. This is the secret of the Divine Wisdom and the lesson to be learned if we would be wise in the things of God.

In questioning as to what Theosophy is, we hear, as I have said, various replies ; and some reply that it is a sect, some that it is anti-any-religion, and some that it belongs to that long list of "isms" which increases from time to time, and some that it takes you away from your own religion. It is impossible that the Divine Wisdom can be or do any of these things. It cannot be against any religion but must include all—it cannot be sectarian else it separates, the Divine Wisdom cannot separate, it must draw together, it could never tend to take away any from his religion seeing that the fundamentals of all religions are at one within the Divine Wisdom. It may and does show up the empty form of a religion and point out and uncover the form of Truth within that religion, which Truth may have been hidden by various empty forms or ceremonies. It does point out the essentials, the fundamental truths and discard the heresies. The Divine Wisdom cannot seek to destroy

a Truth else is it not Divine Wisdom but foolishness.

It is significant to notice a certain fear of Theosophy—a dread that it should become powerful, a quaking for fear that the truth should spread. This is a sign of the power that is felt within it, for one is not afraid of that which is weak, one dreads not a feeble foe and one does not quake in the presence of an inferior. The enemies who attack it only show this up and put the reality of it before the world. If you want a thing to die, do not attack it openly.

Theosophy must be all inclusive, wide enough to include all and everyone—the Bolshevist and ultra Conservative, the Puritan and the Ritualistic, the ignorant and the sage, the Mystic and the Occultist. Nothing is outside it, no religion and no line of thought that seeks Truth.

The Essence of Theosophy is the fact that man, being himself divine, can know the Divinity whose life he shares. As an inevitable corollary to this supreme truth comes the fact of the Brotherhood of Man. The divine Life is the spirit in everything that exists, from the atom to the archangel; the grain of dust could not be were God absent from it; the loftiest seraph is but a spark from the eternal Fire, which is God. Sharers in one Life, all form one Brotherhood. The immanence of God, the solidarity of Man, such are the basic truths of Theosophy.

If then we are sharers of one Life, the fact of a Brotherhood of Man follows without question, for the loftiest form of life, be he Man or angel or God, and the lowest form, be it fish or insect, partakes of that one life and in a sense shares the same hope.

Granted then that all forms of life come from one source and that a vast brotherhood is the result, we seek immediately to find ways and means to make that Brotherhood a living reality, something that we can realise and feel in everyday life.

The secondary teachings of Theosophy

are those which are the common teachings of all religions, living or dead; the Unity of God; the triplicity of His nature; the descent of Spirit into matter, and hence the hierarchies of intelligences, whereof humanity is one; the growth of humanity by the unfoldment of consciousness and the evolution of bodies—*i.e.*, reincarnation; the progress of this growth under inviolable law, the law of causality—*i.e.*, karma; the environment to this growth, the three worlds, physical, astral, and mental, or earth, the intermediate world and heaven; the existence of divine Teachers, super-human men.

Each religion has presented all these Teachings emphasising one or other special teaching to suit the times in which it came and the race to which it was sent. From time to time also different teachings have dropped out from

some religions as, for instance, the teaching of reincarnation dropped out of Christianity about the fourth century and is now being discovered by the few but not yet adopted by the church, the would-be representative of that religion. This wonderful unity of teachings in all religions is due to the fact that all the founders were members of the Great Brotherhood of Divine Teachers, the Guardians of the Divine Wisdom known now as Theosophy. From that Brotherhood is sent a Founder for a new religion, which is no new religion but the same Truths presented in a slightly different form—emphasising as I have said some special point or points to suit the times, condition, climate, race, etc. The symbols of the religions are also found to be the same though, possibly, one is more prominent in some particular religion than in another because it emphasises the dominant note of that religion. The circle, the cross, the eye, the triangle, the star with varying number of points, five, six, seven, eight and twelve, and the Sun, are all common symbols all the world over. The finding of these symbols universally has been a revelation to those who thought and believed that the Cross, for instance, was the special property

use, whereas this symbol has been known to have existed hundreds of thousands of years ago. The discovery of one or two facts such as this has made a great impression on the narrow ranks of the church and the broader minded are seeking further explanation, and these are among the ones who ask what is Theosophy.

Theosophy cannot therefore divide religions, it belongs to all and all belong to it, nay, are parts of it. From this short sketchy article it will be seen that to understand Theosophy is an attempt to understand the laws of the world, the laws of God's plan, and is no light study. Seeing also that all life belongs to God and Theosophy belongs to all life, a universal Brotherhood is the natural and the only outcome. There is room no longer for class distinctions, sect divisions, caste obstacles or sex disqualification, for all such separations are contrary to the Unity of God, for in God is no separation. Again, to place the practical side of this before you so as not to mislead you, I would point out that as the world is at present this does not mean a teaching of *equality*. We know and acknowledge the *fact* that there are distinctions, divisions, obstacles, and I shall deal with this in my talk on Reincarnation which will come later.

We have seen that Theosophy builds its teaching on the Unity, "seeing in each form the expression of a common Life" it naturally follows, therefore, that once we realise the Unity, the oneness, we realise that a fault committed against that unity is a fault committed against brotherhood and is felt by each member of that brotherhood, it reacts on each and there can be no separate life in the sense that we live to ourselves. We cannot live to ourselves or by ourselves as separate units, for in the big and wide sense our every action, our every thought reacts on humanity, for what injures one must injure all though it may be to a very slight degree. This is a big thing to say and perhaps it is one of the biggest things for us to realise if we want to become practical Theosophists. We either help or hinder—there is no middle course—we aid or we clog and we make our own choice as to which we intend to do. You will say that each one is so small, so insignificant that the difference can be but slight. Yes that may be so, but in a vast bit of machinery the smallest screw is of use and the failure of the small screw to do its work may disorganise a large part of the vast machine. This thought is worthy of much consideration, in one sense it makes us realise the vastness of the meaning of

the Divine Wisdom, how all are one and part of each other in the Great Divine Unity of life, and yet we have the possibility of separating ourselves by refusing to work with God's Plan, by the insistence that we must work for ourselves with a selfish motive. In a word, we belong to one of two parties, either we help on God's plan or we work for ourselves, and thereby work against it. We could not have a higher code of Brotherhood than this, the evil we do is poison thrown into the big stream of humanity and is a sin against the Unity. What greater aim than to attempt to understand God's work for humanity and to do our bit to work in with it. The stumbling-block over which so many of us fall is ourselves, but what higher honour than to know that God needs our help to help Him in His Work.

CHAPTER II

GOD'S PLAN

IT has come down to us in an old legend that at one period of the world's history man lost his divinity. He had been careless over the treasure that God had given him and had mislaid it. This important event caused the gods to meet in conclave to consider what must be done since man had shown how little he valued the gift of his own divinity. During this council one god suggested that it should be hidden in the depths of the seas; no, answered the others, man was full of curiosity and zest, and he would be going down to those depths to gather pearls wherewith to adorn himself or by which to grow rich, and in doing this he might find the lost treasure. Then another god suggested that it should be hidden in the bowels of the earth. No, again replied the majority—man was an adventurer and would be digging for gold and diamonds and in seeking what he considered treasure he might come across the

great Treasure before he sought it of his own accord for Its own sake. Then one God wiser than the rest said "let us hide it in man himself; he will never think of seeking Divinity within himself". And so the legend goes on to say that this precious treasure was hidden *within man*, and possibly the time is dawning when he will begin to seek for it.

"God's plan for man is to unfold his latent Divinity" and His plan is worked out in each department of creation from the atom to the animal and to man himself. All life flows out from the same source as I said last week, and in as far as we are all partakers of that one life we are sharers one with the other and partakers of *each other*.

God, or the Logos as He is sometimes called, sends us forth out of Himself to live in one sense a separate life "bound on a wheel of birth and death, and birth again, each life as a day in the school of eternal life," each life for the purpose of completing a certain lesson or many lessons. Mr. Jinarajadasa makes a very simple and clear diagram of this plan in his *First Principles of Theosophy*. He points out that at the early stage when we were all savages we learnt by "getting," the insistent "I want it" was the keynote by which we obtained a

small amount of knowledge. We may say at this early stage that selfishness was almost necessary; two instincts only we may also, roughly, say were awake; preservation of life by food and preservation of life by perpetuating it. "I want it" comes in strongly here and I must have food. So I must kill to obtain it and hunt for it—possibly, nay, probably, this was the one idea in the head of the savage, a selfish idea. With the secondary thought that the species must be perpetuated comes an unselfish idea, it is at once a thought for some one else, a mate to share and when the young ones are there no longer is the desire for food for self only but he has to provide food for the family also. With the next stage in the plan after thousands of thousands of years and many rebirths comes another dominant note, grown out of the fact of sharing the food with the family, and this is in the elementary civilised man who wants to share with his countrymen. "We will share it" is the second phase. Then the diagram goes further and points out that after thousands of years and again many rebirths the spiritual nature developes. The seed which he had sown far back in the savage state, "Let me help you," may have been said within himself to his helpless babe; and, in the third

stage, we claim "let me help you" as the keynote to that stage. It is a higher stage, beyond the stage of the world as a whole at present. It is the exception to find the man or woman whose life is given to "Let me help you". The day of the democracy which we are beginning to understand is the day of the second stage "We will share it".

The day when we realise that man's Divinity is to be found within ourselves is the day that makes us change our note to "Let me help you"; for as we discover divinity within us the truth dawns and we begin to understand that separation in all its forms is not in accordance with the plan of God but that He works for Unity—non-separation.

The fourth stage is a higher step still, again after thousands of years and many lives; this stage is more difficult to describe. In the same diagram the keynote of this stage is "In His Name". Selfishness departing, the motive for action, not for myself but for some one else and "In His Name"—not *my* nor *thy* but *His*. The attitude to life altered, the attitude to work altered. Selfish ambition is passing and work is henceforth dedicated to the Master. Our motive of life changed, not selfish pleasures, but to give pleasure to others because they belong to Him.

A longing seizes us to take upon ourselves part of the load of human pain and suffering—the seed for this being sown when we were in the “Let me help you” stage. The difference is very marked in this change—not let *me* help *you*, but in *His* Name let all be offered and given, for all belongs to Him.

And the fifth step is harder still to speak of and the keynote is given as “Not I but the Father”. We instantly recall the words of the Christ “Not my Will but Thine be done”. Each one knowing within himself the high stage in evolution that this must mean, a stage to be aimed at, a stage to look forward to in the distance but a stage that *can* be accomplished by all. For did not the Christ also say “Be ye therefore perfect even as your Father in Heaven is perfect”.

“I and my Father are one,” that is the perfect unity, the goal of God’s plan. We can as yet only catch a glimpse of the possibility of such a state, but there is time and opportunity and we may even now be changing from the “I” stage to the “We” stage. How much is there in the simple word of I and We—one separates, the other unites. So long as “I” dominates, so long as “I” must be first, must be recognised, must be praised, so long are we

holding back our own evolution and not working in with the general forward step towards the far distant goal of "Not I but my Father".

It is a very long road—life after life, life after life, forward and upward, on the eternal ladder of life, and the Divine Wisdom seeks to show these truths to the world, so that when once they are recognised we may join hands as we acknowledge the need for the unity of Brotherhood and work only for that which unites and cease to work for everything that divides. Each one of us must come to a stage in our lives when we wake up to this fact, and it is often a very rude awakening when we find out how little we know, and that all the past therefore seems futile and wasted. There was a time when we thought we knew something. That was when we were very, very young, and the moment we begin to know a little we realise that we know nothing in comparison with all that there is to know. You must surely have noticed that the one who knows something speaks little and is learning always, and the one who knows nothing is always anxious to show what he thinks is knowledge and talks much and is full of pomposity.

In studying the Divine Wisdom the "know-alls" have no place, for the knowledge to be

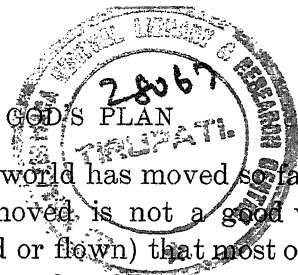
obtained is endless and the source of knowledge we may liken to a bottomless pit, but in one sense no time is wasted, for each stage is necessary, each stage has its lesson, each stage must be gone through. Our method of obtaining knowledge varies according to our own temperament, to the race to which we belong, to our conditions, to our climate, to the country of our birth and hundreds of other things; also we must not forget the important factor of the influence of our past lives. There is no royal road to knowledge save the road of life. It is in our hands whether we make use of the object lessons on the road or whether we miss our opportunities. All have opportunities and it is because of this large variety of methods of obtaining knowledge that we find the vast variety, almost limitless, amongst human beings. In the stage of the savage the opportunities must be more or less alike and yet it is evident that even here there is a great variety of how these opportunities are taken. It is the same now to a certain extent—I rather refrain from adding those words “to a certain extent”; for I often find that, in our present stage (which I have counted as the second stage for the very large majority), we are apt to make excuses for not taking opportunities and to blame our past

lives for what is really a slackness within us in this life.

During the Great War a very visible mark was made on mankind ; the great one-pointedness of life which developed at that time was plain to see. We all had one aim, to help the War. It was a wonderful time in which to live, especially in those countries which took the most prominent part in the War. One thought existed in all minds, and that was to work for the War, through this a marvellous unselfishness seemed to burst into life. I remember at one of my "seeings-off" at a station, when the War looked almost hopeless to the cause of the Allies, how miraculous was the restraint shown, a strength of purpose, the resolve "to do it," on the faces of all present, on the faces of the officers as they looked after everything and everybody, forgetting no detail for the comfort they could give the men ; on the faces of the men when they knew what they had to face, for I speak of a time when it was seeing them go back to what they knew they had to face ; not as at first when there was a certain amount of romance about the journey, a certain spirit of adventure, of the unknown and the unexpected. It was a very different day when everything that was latent and hidden was called out in

service, and these are days that can never be forgotten. Women and children had come to the station to do their bit in sending others off. Not a tear was shed, just the expression on their faces "we must all help to win the War". They had all grasped the meaning of the plan of the War in which all had to unite, and they had reached the stage then, on that day, of "Let me help you" to carry out the plan. This was the third stage, for no one thought of himself. The ones that were to be left behind only thought of sending the others off happy and strong for the work, and the ones who went thought only of the service of the King. This was a small plan compared with God's plan, and yet one can see that by grasping the need for unity of purpose, in what I have called for want of a better name "the plan of the War," such a tremendous effect can be produced. What might we not produce if we could grasp God's plan and work in with it, for it, one-pointedly? What I have described at the station on one day went on at several stations all through the five long years of the War, every day more than once. Do you think a country can go through that and not have learnt a lesson?

Now is the time to talk to the world of God's plan, for "God has a plan and that plan is



evolution". The world has moved so fast in the last ten years (moved is not a good word, we might say, rushed or flown) that most of us have to stop to take breath and see where we stand, lest the strain be too great and we be carried off our feet. No wonder so many ask what is Theosophy? The Divine Wisdom points out to us God's plan. It lies in the power of each one of us to pause and think, and we can discriminate that which helps from that which hinders. In this sketch I have not been able to express a quarter of what I wanted to say. I have mentioned the War; was that part of God's plan? My answer is *Yes*, because we would have it no other way. It is always in my mind that the Great Brotherhood above must have hoped that we would make conditions so that all the suffering and pain might be averted, but it had to be to break up the conditions *which we had made*. The question now before us is, are we considering the conditions before us now? "God geometrises," Plato is supposed to have said. He is the Great Geometrician, and to work against Him, or not actively for Him, is to break ourselves on the wheel. In what lies the difference of the way we work and how are we to recognise the difference? In a word, I reply: "To work with Him is to work for

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Him, to work against Him is to work for ourselves."

It is an easy distinction, but not so easy to carry out, for service means renunciation of self, but if the Service of the King was put first in the War, can we not put God's Service first in working for a Peace. We have the chance now. The world's condition to-day makes it in one way so much easier for us, for the old conditions are broken up, conventions are slipping away, old customs are being forgotten, prejudices dying. It is a chance of many life times, and we must remember that every barrier we put, consciously or unconsciously, which makes for separation, be it in people or nations, is a boulder on the road and a clog in the wheel of God's plan; but every work that unites people or nations or tongues, every step that is taken for a better understanding amongst the people so as to draw them together is a help to God's plan of evolution, to Unity, and draws together towards that Brotherhood which is, as I have said, the essence of the Divine Wisdom.

Thus swiftly have we surveyed the mighty work which began long, long ago and yet is, as the Upanishad says, "Still in the womb."

Creator, Preserver, and Destroyer, He builds and unbuilds, and builds again, one step nearer by

each stage to the Perfection of His plan. To see that plan is to have the Beatific Vision; to work for that plan is to change one's mortal nature to that of a deathless Immortal. Deathlessness in life, eternity in time, Divinity in humanity are his who, understanding the Plan, works for it unceasingly.

CHAPTER III

THE LAW OF REBIRTH

WE have already referred to "birth and death and birth again" in our previous articles. To-day we want to look a little more closely into this great subject. I have said that all religions have recognised this law at one time or another. Here in the East it is a living faith, in the West it dropped out of Christianity about the fourth century by common consent of a Council of the Church Dignitaries. It is quite possible that the decision was no accident but was necessary for the working out of our evolution. The keynote struck by the Christian Faith has been a note of individuality, if I can put it in that way. It is a religion which taught that each one worked out his own salvation in a single life. Doubtless this belief was needed to make man work for individualism which has been necessary for the world at this

only one chance for man in one single life has made him press forward with everything that pertains to that life. He has had to hurry up, for he would get no second chance if he missed this, the one, opportunity. The hurry, bustle and scurry of the West may be largely due to this thought behind it, to get in as much as possible in a short space of time, the object of this not being for the good of the whole but for man's individual and personal advancement.

It does not need a profound thinker to ask a few questions of the teachers of the one life system, for the first thought that comes to one is: "How can I believe in the justice of God?" I remember when I was busy in one of London's largest hospitals how this question came again and again to me when I saw the suffering and pain endured, specially, by the children. Why should children be born to suffer? How could an all-merciful and just God allow the suffering; and what is the cause? At the first question the idea that the child's soul or spirit is a new creation broke down utterly unless one doubted the justice of God. A just God and a newly created spirit do not work together. Heredity is no answer either, and belief in free-will comes to naught in the face of the world's

suffering, if the law of rebirth is not to be believed.

It is unthinkable that God should hold in his hands two baskets, one full of prizes to give to one whom He would favour, by giving him a castle to live in, with every luxury, every care, love surrounding him and every opportunity to make him wise, lovable and true, and in the other hand another basket with nothing but poverty, starvation, to deal out, a slum to live in, no beauty, no chance in life, ill-health, possibly worse; and yet that that same God should demand the same result from these two, is, as I have said, unthinkable—one never seeing evil, the other in the midst of crime.

Again another question comes up: "What becomes of the spirit of the new-born babe which only lives for a few hours? Has it by that short life had its experience?" If the spirit is specially created for that short-lived body, what a waste of energy it seems to be to have created it. Why is one cut off after a few days, one in the prime of youth, and yet another allowed to live long after remembrance and all faculties have ceased to function? I spent much time, patience and energy in asking for an explanation to these questions and the Church only replied, "It is God's will;" and in

one's own turn one replied, "That God then I cannot serve". These questions must come to all of us, and in talking of God's things and His plan we want to know a little more of how these things work out and what Theosophy says with reference to them.

One of the usual questions with reference to rebirth is: "If I have lived before, why do I not remember?" This appears at first sight a reasonable question, but in reality it is not so. I must answer by putting another question to you. Have you ever sat down and gone through every detail of the previous day to see how much you remember, or every detail of a week ago, or a month ago, a year ago, five, ten, fifteen years how much do you remember? Our childhood is almost forgotten, even great events, like illness which has left a scar or a fall that has made a cripple, are not clearly remembered; yet if we go deeper into this, we find that we have in our inner consciousness remembered much. We have learned not to run into the river, for instance, and not to put our hand into the fire. We have certain memories of fear, of love, and of hatred, this varies in different people. I know of someone who had a great dread of the smell of wine and of taking any drug whatsoever, an incomprehensible fear that someone

would ask him to take some drug and that he would not be able to resist. How can one account for such an idea unless it is a memory? I know in some cases the word instinct is suggested, but that scarcely applies to drugs or to wine.

In talking of God's Plan I followed a sketch of five stages, pointing out that the race was now working on towards the third of these stages. We can take these stages in a more personal way, and let us for a moment consider these stages as steps on the ladder of evolution. First, however, I must take you yet further back to the lower forms of life. We have seen that the source of life is the same for all forms, in fact, we have seen that God's life flows through all forms of life from the atom to the man; and I refer you to the story of the creation which, if taken symbolically, is a true story of man's evolution. Watts presents the story in rather a different way, very beautifully. He shows the world as a globe gradually opening, and from within all forms of life burst out one after another, and out of one another, all in turn, all in order, and the life force developed in each and through each, and all in a rhythmical order as if to the sound of a perfect music. It was to the perfect music of God's Word: "their sound

is gone out into all lands and their words unto the ends of the world," that the reply came to His call through all the perfect forms. Count Keyserling has put this very well, though I repeat it as a translation, which means in other words, that a perfect rose in its own line represents His life better than an imperfect life can do even in a more evolved form.

Every manifestation (form, appearance) can, within its limits, express the Atman. To God the perfection of the Rose and of the Buddha mean the same thing; the former stands closer to God than the Buddha stood before He reached His perfection (illumination).

It may be then that we go through various forms and come to a stage of perfection in each. It seems as if this must be so, and not that we leave that special form before it is as perfect as it can be in its own line. Down through the ages then we have all come, expressing life in various forms until we come to the time when we have evolved sufficiently to take a man's body, a man in the elementary state of a savage. I have hurried over this possibly too much to be clear, but I would refer you to a large amount of Theosophical literature, if you wish to trace in detail the course of evolution. Life after life, return after return, is required by us to learn and to complete in ourselves that which

shall bring us along the road to perfection. For perfection is our aim.

There is, perhaps, no philosophical doctrine in the world that has so magnificent an intellectual ancestry as that of Reincarnation—the unfolding of the human Spirit through recurring lives on earth, experience being gathered during the earth life and worked up into intellectual faculty and conscience during the heaven-life, so that a child is born with his past experiences transmuted into mental and moral tendencies and powers.

Though the Christian Church rejected this ancient doctrine, yet we find that scholars from all ages have accepted it. The Buddha taught it, Pythagoras and Plato also taught it. Josephus states that it was accepted by the Jews, “in the Wisdom of Solomon it is stated that coming into an undefiled body was a reward of ‘being good’”. Christ told His disciples that John the Baptist was Elijah, so He accepted it. In the Middle Ages from a learned Sufi of Islam we hear :

I died out of the stone and I became a plant ;
I died out of the plant and I became an animal ;
I died out of the animal and I became a man ; why
should I fear to die ? When did I grow less by
dying ? I shall die out of the man and shall become
an angel.

We find it taught by Goethe, Schelling, Lessing and other German philosophers.

The fact of reincarnation brings back justice to God and power and freewill to man. The difference of caste, of class, of creed are all necessary for their different lessons, and they have to be learnt in each place, in each phase, in each life, not necessarily in every phase or every life. It ceases to be unjust if you are born in a castle and I in a slum, if by this we are able to learn that which these several positions bring, and if that lesson was specially needed from what had happened in previous lives. According to the way in which we "take life" is the character builded into each one of us. For we either bring in treasures that we shall be glad to carry on or load ourselves with dross that becomes a load in future. Pain and sorrow of all sorts and kinds seem to be the means by which our thoughts are turned to the desire for perfection, the desire to help humanity and to lessen the sufferings of others, and the desire for unity with God. In pain and suffering we learn as nothing else seems to teach us the futility, the uselessness and emptiness of doing work for gain for ourselves.

We all go through lives when we strive for pleasure for ourselves, for luxury, for gold, and then we go through a stage and find the pleasure turned into pain, the luxury into

emptiness, the gold into dross. I may be wrong, but I feel very strongly that we have all to go through that stage in one way or another before we turn to the work of discriminating that which is of use, that which lives after we are dead, and that which *really matters*, and the answer echoes from land and sea. The only thing of use is that which helps others, the only deeds that live are noble and self-sacrificing ones, the only thing that matters is God's work, whether we help that or hinder that. These distinctions take a long time to discriminate, and for this reason we work on life after life until discrimination is not needed, for we *know* and can do no other.

There are more instances of remembrances of past lives than most of us are aware of, and if we are on the look-out for signs, they are not very hard to seek. How often do we find a recognition when two people meet possibly for the "first time". How often do we find that we "know" some one that we have "just met," that we understand an acquaintance of a day better than the friends of long years' standing. How often are members of a large family almost strangers, one amongst them being altogether different as if the mother hen had hatched a duckling amongst the chickens, and how often

we speak of "Love at first sight" as if that were possible, unless a recognition of soul were not the foundation for it. Again how often we recognise a picture of a place that in this life we have not visited, and we feel at home in a strange country and even find our way about in a strange city. We cannot quite sweep aside these facts which are almost everyday occurrences, neither can we put forward any other working explanation.

I have just put these few considerations before you for you to think over. Reincarnation seems to be a necessity. There is no other way. Can you suggest a better one?

The savage of to-day is the saint of the future; all tread a similar road; all are destined to ultimate human perfection. Pain follows on mistakes and is ever remedial; strength is developed by struggle; we reap, after every sowing, the inevitable result; happiness growing out of the right, sorrow out of the wrong.

CHAPTER IV

ACTION AND REACTION

A SOMEWHAT dull title, but a Universal Law which none may or *can* put aside, essential to the law of evolution. In the physical world no one disputes the inviolability of natural law and this law is as inviolable in the super-physical worlds as in the physical, for all the worlds are made and sustained by God and come therefore under this Law.

The divine Will makes for Righteousness, and those who disregard it must inevitably suffer. Hence the continual warning of Sages and Prophets, that all which is against righteousness is a cause of pain.

By our own thought we create our character; for a thought often repeated becomes a habit and a habit becomes gradually a permanent quality, a part of our character. A thought is behind every action. "That on which the mind dwells the body performs."

"Man is created by thought; that which he thinks on in one life, he becomes in another.

“All that we are is the result of what we have thought: it is founded on our thoughts, it is made up of our thoughts.”

By our activity, our acting on others, we bring about a certain reaction on ourselves. Joyousness spreads joyousness, a smiling face calls forth a smiling face from another. Similarly a “long” face begets a “long” face from a neighbour. We act and react on each other in a manner which comes often as a shock, and which is a field of study if our desire is to act well and honourably towards all.

The Lord Buddha said :

If a man speaks or acts with an evil thought, pain follows him, as the wheel follows the foot of the ox that draws the carriage. . . . If a man speaks or acts with a pure thought, happiness follows him, like a shadow that never leaves him.

St. Pauls also puts it very strongly :

Be not deceived; God is not mocked; whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

This unchanging law makes us feel and realise the universality of life, how none can live to himself alone, but gives and takes whether he will or not; for what he *is* he gives to others, and what he is capable of receiving returns to him. For instance, if he is irritable, despondent, he passes his irritability and despondency

on to his neighbour, and if his neighbour is inclined to irritability or despondency, it makes him much worse, for he reacts to the atmosphere caused by his neighbour. Similarly, if in the presence of one much more evolved than ourselves who is capable of spreading love, peace, strength, power, the law acts in the same way, the reaction being according to the capability of response which is able to be given to attune oneself to the presence of one so much more advanced than ourselves.

In a true sense, "they walked no more with Him" is explained in this way. The multitude could not attune themselves, could not understand, therefore, the Christ when He was among them. They found themselves unable to follow, they could not react or respond or attune themselves to Him.

Often we use excuse as a cloak for ourselves and say that we are influenced by so and so ; that one could not influence if there were not to be found in us that which responded to his influence. We cannot blame another for that, but it acts in the same way for a good influence as for a bad one. Therefore I have said none can live to himself alone. It has often been said that one cannot go into the presence of another without being influenced for good or bad.

Wherever we go, be it in train or carriage, we may leave a thought which another picks up, we leave in this way an influence which affects others. Thus pain caused to another by thought or act means suffering to ourselves sooner or later, and happiness spread means happiness flowing back to ourselves.

This does away with all injustice, and is not, as some would say, severe or stern, but a just and natural law, "And to Thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy; for Thou renderest to every man according to his work."

Man has free-will to sow what seed he will, but having sown he must not complain or be surprised that the harvest will show what he has sown. Gradually, very gradually, and very slowly we learn therefore *what* to sow.

What he desires in the future he must sow now. "Do men gather grapes of thorn or figs of thistles?" If you want grapes, you must not sow a fig tree. It is no use to sow oats and expect to gather wheat at the harvest. We must sow in one life that which we desire to reap in the next. The difficulty here comes in that we do not discriminate what we want to reap, and sow broadcast not thinking of the tares and weeds that will face us in the next life. For just when we have begun to discriminate the real from the

unreal, the lasting from the fleeting, and hope to gather the fruit, we find that that fruit cannot be reached because of the wild sowings of the past, and because a jungle of waste stuff besets our path, a jungle which we have ourselves sown. It is a terrible task to set to work to dig ourselves out of the jungle of the weeds. But it has to be done, and in the doing of it we suffer terribly. We suffer weariness, we suffer heartache after heartache at the magnitude of the task, and we suffer from scratches and blows and all sorts of difficulties and obstacles and impediments.

Illnesses, disorganised bodies, uncontrolled bodies, are all part of the jungle that we have sown. To put it figuratively, we have possibly come to the time when we have caught a glimpse of the fruit that is attainable, and we find that we have bound ourselves round with bond after bond, and we have to get out of the mesh before we can reach the fruit. In everyday life what does this mean? It means that in the past we have misused our body by excesses of all sorts, by over-taxing all the different organs until one or other declines to work for us, and in the next life we take a body where we find the defect, and we find ourselves working with the disadvantage of ill health.

In character-building we find the same difficulties; we have been careless, for instance, in seeking truth until we have formed the habit of speaking untruths or half-truths, and we find that the struggle to speak truth is almost beyond us, for we have swerved from the direct line and "cannot help it"; or we have allowed passion to dominate us, and when we think in this life we have mastered the serpent, we find that its head appears in unexpected places, and that it is stronger than we are, and it needs all our struggle over and over and over again to keep it in subjection, much longer to slay it.

Ignorance and laziness are closely allied. In the past we have let ourselves "go," possibly we loved luxury rather than learning and to walk in "high places" rather than to seek knowledge; and now, when our eyes are partially opened, what is the result? The brain is atrophied and we cannot get it to work. We find that it tires, and we cannot get through the work that we would do.

At last we come to the time of a turning-point in our career or life when we long to be of service to the world. The love of humanity burns in our heart. We turn to the Light

and we find that the chains have us in their grip.

"Prisoner, tell me, who was it that bound you?"

"It was my master," said the prisoner. "I thought I could outdo everybody in the world in wealth and power, and I amassed in my own treasure-house the money due to my king. When sleep overcame me I lay upon the bed that was for my lord, and on waking up I found I was a prisoner in my own treasure-house."

"Prisoner, tell me who was it that wrought this unbreakable chain?"

"It was I," said the prisoner, "who forged this chain very carefully. I thought my invincible power would hold the world captive leaving me in a freedom undisturbed. Thus night and day I worked at the chain with huge fires and cruel, hard strokes. When at last the work was done and the links were complete and unbreakable, I found that it held me in its grip."

But the turning-point has come. An uphill journey begins, "uphill all the way right to the very end". Never mind, on the road there are flowers to be gathered, for we have sown several flowers as well as several weeds, and the flowers have helped us to climb where we find ourselves to-day. We have sown pain, but we have sown joy as well, and the very moment we wake up to realise the law of cause and effect we start on a new road. For, once we

watch every seed. We are evolving to the stage where we watch and weigh every word, every thought, and struggle not to make more difficulties for our next life. This is the very just course of evolution. If I do wrong, I have to right it. If I break myself against God's Law, I alone can repair myself, for every time God's Law is disregarded, it reacts upon me.

We may kick against His Law, but *it* cannot change, we break. It is not, therefore, an unjust God who tortures children with illness, but it is the child who has broken God's Law in the past who is suffering for that in this life. It is no longer unjust that you live in a castle and I in a slum. You have won your advantage and are given the chance to see how much you have learned to make good use of your position. I have the chance of seeing what I can learn in a slum and how much I understand of my brothers and their condition there. If I had never been in a slum, could I understand the life lived there, its difficulties and pains? No. I try to welcome the slum life which should bring understanding to me. For "Thou canst create this day thy chances for thy morrow". What a revelation is this to those who in despair and hopelessness would "give up". What an incentive to go on and work off the chains that bind, and make

ourselves free. We bound ourselves and only we can give ourselves freedom. At the moment, all of us are bound by one fetter or another but, once we break them, we are of use to help others to be free. Once we stand as free men, we can be of use in God's Great Plan, and not until:

The Wheel of the Good Law moves swiftly on. It grinds by night and day. The worthless husks it drives from out the golden grain, the refuse from the flour.

True knowledge is the flour, false learning is the husk.

A harsh word uttered in past lives is not destroyed, but ever comes again.

Thou canst create this day thy chances for thy morrow. In the great journey, causes sown each hour bear each its harvest of effects, for right justice rules the world.

What are the fetters?—desire for life in form, desire for possession, pride, self-satisfaction. We are only free when we cast these away for ever and become men made perfect, "A Pillar in the Temple of my God who shall go out no more".

CHAPTER V

ATTITUDE TO ALL RELIGIONS

I KNOW of a beautiful Banyan Tree that spreads its branches far and wide. It covers a great space of ground and it always reminds me of the attitude of Theosophy to all religions. Itself (Theosophy) the Mother trunk and while spreading itself it contacts the earth in many places and throws out tendrils which in their turn become trunks and spread out branches; all part of the mother tree. The tendrils are the messages of each religion, and each thrives as it touches the earth, and, as I have said, becomes in itself a trunk and spreads its own branches. It is in itself a tree and has its own life, but is united to the big tree also, for from that it came.

All religions have come from the same source, and yet each religion is separate in so far that it strikes a different note, a note specially suited to the times, to the country, to the race to which that note is sounded.

The study of the religions seems almost an essential part of Theosophy, for man is largely influenced by the religion in which he is born, and the country in which he lives has built up a certain line of religious thought. So long as we take the religions of the world as something separate in their growth and evolution, so long will Brotherhood be an impossibility.

For Brotherhood can only grow as we discover that which draws us together in a common cause, a common thought or common ideal, as we understand and study the customs which largely have grown out of and from the religion of the country. There could be no greater barrier to Brotherhood than the barrier made by the thought that any one religion is *the only* religion, the *one and only road* to God. Every religion has the same fundamental truths presented in different forms, if you like, to suit, as I have said, climate, race and epoch. As time passes, these truths get hidden by the outer form or diverted by superstition which has grown round them; or possibly the priestcraft has laid down laws of certain creeds and dogmas which have been instrumental in hiding the truth.

We find, for instance, the same symbols all over the world. The bull sacred to Buddhism

was also sacred in Egypt. It is an exceedingly interesting study to discover how all symbols are practically universal.

Processions have been made in all religions from time to time always taking the course of the Sun. At Stonehenge there is still to be seen a circular pathway round which priests and people walked, and the age of Stonehenge goes back to thousands of years.

The Sun has in many religions been the symbol of, and even believed to be the physical body of, God; has been revered in all religions and worshipped in some. This is easily to be understood seeing that on this planet nothing can live without the light and warmth of the Sun, and remembering that we claim our life from God and yet cannot live without the help of the Sun. The two are closely allied in this sense. In Ireland and in the Shetland Islands we find (some in good preservation) the round towers used by the Sun worshippers. Near Bath are the remains of an old Sun Temple and a hill specially adapted for the purpose, and not very many months ago whilst removing the earth they found a large Sun disc in good preservation and of very ancient date belonging to Sun worshippers. We still bow to the rising Sun, some bend the knee and some give reverence from the

heart, and the fundamental idea is the same. Max Muller tells us that "May the Sun quicken our mind" is probably the oldest prayer in the world. The setting Sun has been specially revered in many religions and is kept as a sacred hour. "Going west" is a common phrase and refers to the setting of the individual Sun, the passing into another life. You may ask what has this to do with Theosophy. I reply that in seeking the Wisdom of God we must seek it all over the world and especially in the religions of the world, for the religions are the expression of the attitude of the people to God, and the religious life of a country is the expression of the religious thought in that country. The older the religion as a rule the more debased has it become, but that does not alter the fundamental truths, if we search deep enough to find them.

In all religions there have been sacred books, many, alas, destroyed, but many remain, and in them we find the same teaching of the sacredness of birth and life, and the consecration at birth of the child to God by Baptism, as the Christians call it, water being generally, if not in all cases, the outward or visible sign in the regeneration and presentation of the child. When once one begins to compare the religions

to find the truth underlying them, one has a different attitude to life, a different attitude to all the world. I think nothing helps to break down barriers so quickly, and nothing gives a clearer vision of Brotherhood. In understanding a religion one begins to understand a people and in understanding a people to respect their customs and traditions. Only by studying to understand thus shall we be able to work towards a Brotherhood that is founded on an *equality before God*.

By equality before God I mean that every nation or people has the same right to live, the same right to freedom, the same right to feel the warmth of the Sun and to look at the stars. Equality as man to man is not what is required nor is it possible, and those who now-a-days preach that equality have a mistaken idea. Our past lives and our past sowings and reapings prevent equality. We are very diverse,—you with one capability and I with another. But that we have an equality before God, that we all have a right to walk towards perfection and that no nation has a special blessing dealt out to it, but only a blessing earned by itself in the past, that is what I want to make quite clear.

The struggle towards a League of Nations, the struggle to prevent another War, can only

be a success if all nations are treated with an established right to live. This again can only be done by starting on the fundamental basis that every people has its place in the universe and every religion has its place and comes from God.

The study of the Divine Wisdom shows us in all religions living or dead a common teaching,—the Unity of God and the threefold nature of God or Trinity. Then

the descent of Spirit into matter, and hence the hierarchies of intelligences, whereof humanity is one; the growth of humanity by the unfoldment of consciousness and the evolution of bodies—*i.e.*, reincarnation; the progress of this growth under inviolable law, the law of causality—*i.e.*, karma; the environment to this growth, the three worlds, physical, astral, and mental, or earth, the intermediate world and heaven; the existence of divine Teachers, superhuman men.

While the Unity of God was a fundamental idea in all religions, the names by which He was known seem to have been very numerous and diverse.

Upon the walls of the temple in the oasis of El-Khargeh is inscribed a hymn copied by Brugsch which records “the mysterious names of the God who is *immanent in all* things, the soul of Shu (breath) to all the gods. He is the body of the living man, the creator of the fruit-bearing tree, the author of the inundation; without him nothing liveth within the circuit of the earth, whether north or south, under his name of Osiris, the giver of light; he is the Horus of the living souls, the living

God of the generations yet to come. He is the creator of every animal under his names of Ram of the sheep, god of the goats, Bull of the cows . . . he is the god of those who rest in their graves. Amon is an image, Atmu is an image, Chepera is an image, Ra is an image; he alone maketh himself in millions of ways. He is a great architect who was from the beginning, who fashioned his body with his own hands, in all forms according to his will.

* * *

Such is the splendid sacred vestment which Egyptian theology wove for the mangled and massacred hero of the myth. All forces, all powers, were finally recognised in him; he was sun and moon, and the maker of all things; he was the truth and the life; in him all men were justified.

* * *

And David said, Blessed be thou, Lord God of Israel our father, for ever and ever. Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power and the glory, and the victory and the majesty; for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all. Both riches and honour come of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine hand is power and might; and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all.

* * *

Whither shall I go from thy Spirit; or whither shall I go from thy presence? If I climb up into heaven, thou art there; if I go down to hell, thou art there also. If I take the wings of the morning, and remain in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there also shall thy hand lead me: and thy right hand shall hold me.

But we have not time or space here to write on comparative religions and this article is not intended for that purpose, but rather in reply to those who suggest that Theosophy takes you away from your own particular religion. The Wisdom of God cannot take away from anything, for in itself is all learning and all knowledge. It moreover cannot be opposed to any aspect of the truth, for in itself is all truth. We are incapable of seeing the whole truth and no religion has presented the whole truth; but each has given an aspect of it, and we in our limited vision can only see a part of that truth. If you look out of a window, you cannot see the whole of the horizon, and yet we are not so foolish as to suggest that there is nothing more *to be* seen because we cannot see it. It is the same with truth. The whole truth cannot be grasped by any of us and in the many and various religions of the world an aspect of the truth has from time to time been given out to the world by some great teacher. Round this outpouring of a profound teaching a religion has grown up or been founded. The same truth differently presented, a different aspect of the same Truth.

I know nothing more encouraging, more illuminating, than this revelation, for it was a

revelation to me when I knew that all religions were fundamentally one. There is more prejudice and bigotry centred round religion than anywhere else, and there is more hatred and ill-feeling. These ill-feelings have often grown into feuds and even into wars, and we see signs of it to-day even in our so-called civilised world. This is the reason why I have said that a spirit of Brotherhood cannot come into the world until prejudice against religion has ceased and that prejudice is replaced by the knowledge that each religion has its place in the world.

That all religions need revivifying, cleansing of all the dross which has largely hidden the gold goes without saying. None are exempt, but the world evolves. There is no real retrogression and some of us who look forward to the near coming of the World-Teacher know that He will help to give back to the world the Treasure it has caused to be hidden, and that He will present again to us the Gems that we in our blindness have thrown aside. Shall we recognise Him, shall we know a Treasure when it is put in front of us, and shall we distinguish a Gem when it is shining in our midst? This will all depend upon where our eyes are centred and for what we are seeking.

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What do we consider treasure? "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

He who seeth Me everywhere, and seeth everything in Me, of him will I never lose hold, and he shall never lose hold of Me.

CHAPTER VI

STEPS ON THE PATHWAY

BATH ABBEY is in itself a treasure of the Perpendicular Style of Architecture. It is a pity that it is so shut in by buildings, so that its beauty is not realised; one characteristic however is not hidden but remains a unique and great feature of the building. It is the ladders on either side of the west door, a symbolical ladder leading from earth to heaven on which we see Angels ascending and descending. In two cases an Angel is depicted dropping off the ladder.

Behind every symbol a great truth is hidden. A ladder has been a symbol in many religions, and some of us in our childhood were told of Jacob's ladder which he saw in a dream. The ladder from earth to heaven really exists, and it is a pathway that leads from us to God. We are all stepping on the road towards that great pathway by the fact of our being part of the evolution of the world. Some are conscious of

being on the road, and some walking on it but unconscious of whence they come or whither they go. Christ gave us the command: "Be ye therefore perfect even as your Father in heaven is perfect." He said "I am the Way," so the Way He trod is the road to Perfection, and it is on that road we have to go to climb the ladder to the Goal. All Great Teachers have pointed out the same Way, the same Goal.

Truly are there steps which lead up to that Portal, and there are few which tread that narrow way. The Gate is the Gate of Initiation, the second birth, the baptism of the Holy Ghost and of Fire; the Way leads to the knowledge of God, which is life in the Eternal.

In the different religious thoughts of the West the Goal has been called by different names, Illumination, Attainment, Union, Deification and Salvation, and to pass the Portal is a common phrase. In the West where in one life only we are taught that salvation can be gained, the Portal means the gate of purgatory from whence heaven is gained or hell determined. In the East,

The Occultist—the Knower, or the Gnostic—sees the steps in somewhat other fashion, and divides the path into two great stages, the Probationary and the Path Proper; the Probationary represents the Purgation of the Mystic; the Path itself the Mystic's Illumination and Union. He further

seeks to develop in himself on the Probationary Path certain definite "qualifications," fitting him to pass through the Portal which ends it; while on the Path itself he must wholly cast away ten "fetters," which hold him back from attaining Liberation, or Final Salvation, and must pass through four other Portals or Initiations.

Each step on the pathway requires certain qualifications before the candidate can pass on, and this marks the first great step of the ladder.

I. That piercing vision called *Discrimination* sees Truth and recognises the false through any disguise. In other words, the power to see the real from the unreal, the lasting from the fleeting, the things that live from those that fade, the things that *matter*—from those that are useless. This first step means a change of outlook, for he who has sought this truth and learnt his lesson no longer looks at the things of this world from the world's standpoint. Everything transitory has left him, only the eternal things remain.

II. *Desirelessness* which follows closely on the first, is in fact a necessary outcome, means the mastery of the lower nature. No longer any wish left to possess for pleasure or to avoid that which gives pain. This has also been called Dispassion, the rising above the ebb and flow of pleasure

and pain, able to acquire that attitude to life so that the outer things do not touch us, do not interfere with the inward peace, do not shake that which is stable within us. To gain this stage we must have been through the first, for only by discrimination shall we learn on what rock to anchor. Having discovered that rock, we hold fast, and no storm or tempest made by desires can shake us.

III. *The Six Endowments or Good Conduct* : Control of Mind, Control of Body, of speech and actions, Tolerance, Endurance, Balance or One-pointedness, Confidence or Trust. We need to build into ourselves those qualities which will harden the rock on which we have decided to build, and we set to work undisturbed by outside influences and find it none too easy to control mind and body and thought. That is our aim. The body is not so difficult to control after a certain point, but mind and thought are closely allied, they act and react on each other and are far more difficult to bring into subjection. Yet we have to learn that these are all our servants and must obey the I, the Self, the Spirit that should be lord over them. So long as they govern then are we slaves of the body and mind, tossed about by every wave and movement of the sea of life. To govern

our body, our mind and our thought is the necessary consequence, if we have no other desire save only to pass the gateway that brings us to perfection.

Having attained this control we should be able to gain tolerance, endurance and balance, qualities which affect others even more than ourselves. They are qualities that lead to brotherhood, to fellowship, and on towards the fourth qualification union and love. No brotherhood can exist except on the foundation of tolerance. Tolerance sounds easy, it is in fact the hardest quality to attain. It does not mean the attitude of "All right, leave him alone, I know, he does not," which is what many think; but it is putting into practice the belief that every man has the right to his own opinion and that our part is but to understand his point of view, and finally that it makes no difference to us that he goes his way and that we go ours because we *know* that there are many roads and that each has only a partial vision on those roads.

Endurance is not the sullen acceptance because we can do no otherwise; but it should be the accepting of a debt knowing that the debt is owed by us and comes as an opportunity to pay it off incurring no further debts. We should

with open arms accept the debts and be glad that they are posted to us now. In cheerfulness we should pay them that we may continue on our pathway with lighter load.

Balance or one-pointedness: The path has been called the razor path. We cannot wobble upon it,—to wobble is fatal, for there is a precipice on either side. Balance is a necessity, and one-pointedness is in a sense part of it. If we would keep our balance, we cannot afford to let our thoughts and minds wander from one thing to another, but our minds must be fixed on the walking on the razor path. Pursue this simile, for it is so obvious that if we are attempting to climb, we must keep our heads and we can only do so by keeping our minds fixed on our aim, there can be no looking back.

IV. *Desire for Union or Love.* I have said already this has been called in various religions by several names. Liberation, freedom, seems to express it best, and in the simplest language.

For now the hour is come when I should quit
This golden prison, where my heart lives caged,
To find the truth ; which henceforth I will seek,
For all men's sake, until the truth be found.

Union means that the truth is found, that perfection is gained, that we have become as gods knowing good and evil. A long road, æons of

ages passed, thousands of lives lived, but qualified now to help in the saving of humanity and to be of use in God's world to help Him. No light task, no light attainment. It sounds so easy on paper; it is so hard to carry out; so easy to talk, so hard to attain. We talk as if it were done in a span, and it takes millions of years; but the goal is the only goal worth having, the prize the only gift of any value. Many have travelled this road. So where they have trodden we can tread. They have traced the road. It is for us to follow.

The ladder at Bath Abbey showed some falling from its steps. There is no failure except the failure of ceasing to try. We may make mistakes, and the falling from the ladder may mean one of two things, that our strength has failed and that we are held back for a few lives or that we have gone as far as we can by strength and ability, physically or otherwise, in *this* life and must wait for a renewed body in our next life.

We have talked a great deal about the possibility of our climb, but I want to say a word about those who have already climbed and yet are still "of the human family," our Elder Brothers. I spoke of all religions having a Founder, One who rose above humanity, Who

has reached a stage of loftier heights than I have tried to sketch here. We hear of Divine Teachers, Divine Kings and Rulers, and the testimony of past civilisations and the ruins remaining of their civilisations are so mighty that we are bound to believe in Them.

The Occult Hierarchy which rules, teaches and guides the worlds is a great Order, each rank having its own multifarious duties and carrying them out in perfect harmony, working out a portion of the plan of the Supreme Lord, the Logos of the system, in a service which "is perfect freedom". Two leading departments of our section of this Hierarchy are concerned, the one with the ruling, the other with the teaching, of our worlds.

In the grade of Adepts alluded to above are Those to whom the name of "Masters" more peculiarly belongs, in that They accept as chelas or disciples, those who have reached a point of evolution fitting them to approach the Portal of Initiation, and are resolutely striving to develop in themselves the qualifications above described.

It is through Theosophy that we may learn and know more of these Elder Brothers who are ever ready waiting for us to hold out a hand for their help or send a cry when we claim Their assistance. We cry and

God saith . . . Whoso seeketh to approach Me one span, I seek to approach one cubit; and whoso seeketh to approach Me one cubit, I seek to approach him two fathoms: and whoso walketh

It is we who are apathetic, slack, halting and indifferent. Yet the road is open to all, and the ladder ready before us, these Great Teachers may be sought and found, and the world thirsts and comes not to the waters to drink. It hungers and dare not feed.

Against every spiritual movement, every movement for the uplift of humanity, every endeavour to help towards illumination there is a strong counter-attack. The same applies to small things as well as to great. We make an effort to lead a holy life. Obstacles spring up in our path, and in a world movement such as the Theosophical Society how great is the opposition !

Yet the work moves forward, it grows and expands, attacks are frequent ; but Those who guard humanity guard also all the roads to the Goal, and nothing can touch the pure in heart.

CHAPTER VII

SOME EFFECTS OF THEOSOPHY

IN the preceding articles I have tried to put before you in a very elementary way a rough idea of some of the practical points in Theosophy in reply to the numerous questions asked with reference to it. To-day I want to sketch very broadly some of the effects of Theosophical thought on the world.

The world knows no retrogression. It is ever moving forwards through many vicissitudes, through many phases, through storms and struggles, through many great catastrophes, all necessary to its evolution. The Divine Spark inherent in all life is determined on expression, the physical form in the early stage being totally unaware of the reason of this push on, even unaware of the awakening desire to move on. Nevertheless, slowly, very slowly, almost imperceptibly, evolution moves through countless ages and millions of years and endless stages. Through all this the Divine Spark is determined

to break through, as it were, and claim its own and be recognised. We are all seeking something greater than ourselves. We all acknowledge, therefore, something greater than ourselves. There is no such person as the one who disbelieves in this something greater than himself. He may cavil; he may say he wants proof; he may say there is no proof to be got; he may say he will wait and see; but within himself there is always that something that is fluttering after life which tells him in a thousand ways that he (his body) is not the beginning and the end, that there is something greater, something behind, something above, and something below. So he cannot get away from it, and he is silent, knowing full well the truth of what is told though a veil seems to cloud him.

In realising the truths of Theosophy one becomes changed. Possibly if I speak to-day a little of this change, it will be a reply to the question "What is Theosophy?" in another form, and will at least show some of the effect of Theosophical thought.

I have alluded to the question in former articles why children should be born into the world to suffer, and I tried to show that the suffering of this life is the effect of that which has been

sown in past lives. Imagine, for a moment, the difference it makes in one's attitude to life, if one realises that everything that happens is under law, not a thing of chance, not a hap-hazard happening that comes for no reason. A vast amount of people in the world are under the delusion that they come into it by chance or at best by the arbitrary will of a God, who is depicted as having no sense of justice and with a strong sense of vengeance and vindictiveness.

Take, as another instance, the results of the war. One of the results is so terrible that we hear little or nothing about it. If the world were at one in seeking the Divine Wisdom, there would be no need to veil the facts of these ghastly results, for we should realise that this also comes under the law of action and reaction. I refer, of course, especially to those who are totally disabled by loss of both the upper and lower limbs, by paralysis, by injured spine, by extreme shell-shock, by mental incapacity, and, possibly the worst of all, by fearful facial disfigurement. The large majority of these are shut away necessarily in hospitals arranged for the purpose, or, in one case, in a garden of a College at one of our Universities. Their untold sufferings are difficult to imagine,

and what comfort can be given there except the comfort *first*, that the war was inevitable in the sense that we have made the conditions that caused it, have made the conditions that brought about suffering, individual suffering as well as collective suffering by the blindness of ignorance and therefore the faults of past lives; *second*, that, as the suffering is borne and faced, so will good or bad seed be sown for another life.

It is largely, if not entirely, our fault that those suffering from untold facial disfigurement cannot come amongst us, because we do not wish to be reminded of the suffering and we do not like to see it. It is not pleasant to see deformity, yet how little we work for perfect form and beauty. We wish to save ourselves unpleasantness and thereby greatly add to their suffering because they are almost entirely isolated, nay, by our egoism we cause them to be prisoners when, as I have said, we should be working for their release and welcome them amongst us, insisting that they *do* come amongst us. If we thought this out by the light of Theosophy we should say "We are all one, I must share this pain, it is my part and privilege to help those whose heavy karma has caused them all this suffering."

The ideal of Brotherhood if followed would make it impossible for us to add one jot or one tittle to any suffering. The intense self-sacrifice that was observed in the war in all countries must have been a sacrifice of sweet-smelling savour that went straight to the throne of God when we note that thousands, nay, millions offered up their lives for the sake of their country. This is no place to discuss the rights of each country. The sacrifice offered in each was the same, in the fact that life was offered for the sake of others and for the protection of others. In all the distress and chaos and suffering that the war has caused we sometimes lose sight of this fact, the pain and suffering will pass, but the sacrifice offered lives in the records of eternity.

Do we talk of cruel lessons? Is any lesson cruel? Rather is not every lesson kind? Every effort, every lesson learnt, is a step towards the road that leads to the higher life where pain and suffering will be welcomed as a sign that the fetters and chains of our own past making are being loosed, and we are on the way to freedom from the load with which we have burdened ourselves.

The knowledge of the Divine Wisdom helps us in our attitude to life, and the walls that

separate castes and creeds and nations and people break down under the law of re-birth, and the theory of chance, of luck, breaks down under the inviolable law of cause and effect or action and reaction. How useless to pride ourselves on being born in one class, under any particular flag. Next life we may be in no caste and in some other country. Separation seems to drop out under the shadow of the Divine Wisdom, for the teaching is essentially one that unites, one that calls for union.

I refer often to the separation of caste and creed. The Divine Wisdom helps us to understand the nature of these separations in certain stages of evolution. The East has a caste system founded on life's necessity; the West has a caste system founded more or less on greed. The system of the East has a sound foundation built on a reasonable tradition. In the West we do not call it caste, but I think we may say that money is the necessity that rules position there. Some will disagree with me and say that birth rules. I believe that birth had a greater consideration at one time of the West's history, but money is far ahead now and gains ground every year. It has been often said to me that the war

which is higher or towards that which is lower, meaning that the effect of the war was such that it stimulated people either to greater things or to lower things, no one stood still. The effect of the war is on the same principle,—it has stirred people on either to greater efforts to help humanity or to seek pleasure for themselves. This is profoundly true as can be seen by a superficial study of the affairs of the west. Crime has increased. Prisons closed during the war are now being opened. Morality is at a lower standard, and sex perverts are becoming common and opportunities for “doubtful” pleasures have largely increased. Side by side is a strong effort to unite, to co-operate, to understand one’s neighbour, to raise humanity, to improve, to spiritualise and to understand other nations and to work with them, not against them. That is the reason why so many are asking questions about Theosophy, because it is recognised, consciously or unconsciously, that Theosophy has a truth to give to the world which clears up many muddles and solves many difficulties and works towards brotherhood.

The wide vision that Theosophy gives to those who try to study it is the fundamental ideal of unity, of ultimate union. The One Life goes

and therefore the oneness of life is an unchanging law. We may in our ignorance and blindness work for that which separates, make our own separations and divisions; but in so far as we work for any separation or for ourselves against the whole, which is in itself a separating force, so far shall we break ourselves on the wheel which is the inevitable, unbreakable law of God. I spoke of this in my article on action and reaction. In God's world there cannot be division. We work with His Law or we work against it. It cannot break,—so we inevitably *must*, sooner or later. To sum this up in a word, we work against God's law if we work for ourselves, and we work with God's law or plan of evolution if we realise that we are all one and work as part of a whole for the good of the whole.

In everyday life it is comparatively easy to note those who have caught a glint of the necessity of non-separation. Take a statesman. How can he work selfishly and be a good statesman? He must put himself aside and work for the nation, if he is to aspire to the name of statesman. Carry this a little further, let us not stop at the working for a nation, but for the good of all nations. The League of Nations is the greatest ideal to unite nations that has ever been set forth to the world

in a practical form, and must come to naught unless the ideal of working for the whole is maintained; so long as each nation acts as a separate unit for its own benefit, no League of Nations can be secured. This is no easy task at the present stage of evolution of the world. It is called *natural* to think of oneself. This is a heresy, and born of an erroneous idea of individualism. The natural law is the law of God which ever unites and knows no separation either of nations or peoples or tongues or persons.

This union then is one great truth towards which Theosophy points. It is a striking fact in the report that has been received of the Third Assembly of the League of Nations, which is just over, that the dominant note struck is one of unity, of freedom, of responsibility to all nations large or small, and a desire to work peaceably with all and to help all.

The Theosophical Society seeks to gather together students of Theosophy in all countries. It has National Societies in thirty-seven countries, and the first object is "To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, sex, creed, caste or colour," thus carrying out as a primary object the idea of drawing all men together in

one bond of union to work towards brotherhood, with that for its aim.

Believing in the Fatherhood of God, it follows as a necessary corollary that we should believe in the Brotherhood of man, and it seeks to form a nucleus with that idea. The second object follows as a necessary consequence, if I may say so, of the first; for in order to bring all peoples together the first thing to be done is to study the reason as to why they are divided, and this causes us to study the people, to study their religion, philosophy and science. It is very clear that this is essential if you want to understand a nation, so the second object of the Theosophical Society is "To encourage the study of Comparative Religion, Philosophy and Science". The third object, a necessary outcome of the other two, is "To investigate unexplained laws of nature and the powers latent in man". To be in the Theosophical Society does not make a Theosophist, but it can make a student of Theosophy.

"The Theosophical Society is composed of students belonging to any religion in the world, or to none, who are united by their approval of the above objects, by their wish to remove religious antagonisms, and to draw together men of goodwill, whatsoever their religious opinions, and by their desire to study religious truths, and

to share the result of their studies with others. Their bond of union is not the profession of a common belief, but a common search and aspiration for Truth. They hold that Truth should be sought by study, by reflection, by purity of life, by devotion to high ideals, and they regard Truth as a prize to be striven for, not as a dogma to be imposed by authority. They consider that belief should be the result of individual study, or intuition, and not its antecedent, and should rest on knowledge, not on assertion. They extend tolerance to all, even to the intolerant, not as a privilege they bestow, but as a duty they perform, and they seek to remove ignorance, not to punish it. They see every religion as an expression of the *Divine Wisdom*, and prefer its study to its condemnation, and its practice to proselytism. Peace is their watchword, as Truth is their aim. *Theosophy* is the body of truths which forms the basis of all religions, and which cannot be claimed as the exclusive possession of any. It offers a philosophy which renders life intelligible, and which demonstrates the justice and the love which guides its evolution. It puts death in its rightful place, as a recurring incident in an endless life, opening the gateway of a fuller and more radiant existence. It restores to the world the science of the spirit, teaching man to know the spirit as himself, and the mind and body as his servants. It illuminates the scriptures and doctrines of religions by unveiling their hidden meanings, and thus justifying them at the bar of intelligence, as they are ever justified in the eyes of intuition. Members of

the Theosophical Society study these truths, and Theosophists endeavour to live them. Everyone willing to study, to be tolerant, to aim high, and to work perseveringly, is welcomed as a member, and it rests with the member to become a true Theosophist."

CHAPTER VIII

BROTHERHOOD

THE word brotherhood has become hackneyed, I suppose because we hear so much of it and see so little result. The scoffers laugh at the word because it is misapplied, but all struggle after it in one way or another.

A brotherhood does not consist in people with no backbone, who lean on and "cadge" their fellows, slackers who wish to have their own bed easy, made up at the expense of others, and by others' exertions. To be brotherly is not to be "mushy," or sentimental, or weak. It is true that the world is dominated by the idea that strength is might, that physical strength means power, that force is that which must rule, that gentleness is considered weak, a soft answer cowardly, and quietness and stillness a sign of weakness. This is no new idea but has been so all through long ages. The parable of the Good Samaritan is often cited, the story of the traveller who fell among thieves who robbed him and left him half dead. A certain

priest came that way, and a Levite, both passing by on the other side; but a Samaritan, one looked down on by the then public, saw him, had compassion on him, and helped him, did all he could.

“Which now of these three thinkest thou was neighbour unto him that fell among thieves?” And He said, “He that shewed mercy on him.” Then said Jesus unto him, “Go, and do thou likewise.”

This story is cited as representing Brotherhood, but it was in reply to “Who is my neighbour?” A neighbour is one who lives near by, and often one whom we do not know, never speak to, though we may have lived side by side for years and years. Yet this story was given in reply when Jesus was asked to define neighbour. Neighbour must have had another significance in those days to that which it has now. We take this story as a symbol of Brotherhood. A brother is someone much closer than a neighbour, “a kinsman by blood, one of a common family or race, a fellowman,” united by a common tie, interest, rank or profession, and united also by a common tie of toil, suffering or aim.

In all parts of the world we see a struggle for brotherhood, in various ways; the fact

being that *all* believe deep down, no matter to which religion they belong, in the Fatherhood of God, and therefore work towards the brotherhood of man. This effort is shown in many ways to a very marked degree, moreover some of those efforts which appear to be insignificant are really doing very necessary spade work. Amongst them we may count the co-operative movement, that system by which all members are made joint partners in profits.

The principle of co-operation in contradistinction to competition has long since passed the experimental stage; it is now firmly established as one of the greatest forces in our modern life.

While the external features of the various activities which we saw were in themselves impressive, we were impressed most of all with the fact that the directing genius of the huge business is located by the democratic choice of the members in the hands of the directors who are themselves workmen, and who conduct its affairs without remuneration after their own day's work is done. England has given to us many valuable suggestions during our summer here but none of greater importance than is found in the success of the co-operation movement.

The motto of the movement is a worthy one for India in these days of political responsibility :
" Each for all, and all for each."

Of a very different kind is the struggle after one language, and Esperantists are doing good work in aiming at this, for what does it matter whether Esperanto be adopted as a world language or that another language eventually take that place, the idea of one language is being spread, and that is a big ideal for joining up the peoples of the world.

“Behind the spirit of democracy is brotherhood.” The struggles in every country after democracy, socialism, communism, are all struggles towards brotherhood which are prompted consciously or unconsciously by the pressing forward everywhere of the belief in the Fatherhood of God. The results, I know, would almost prove that statement wrong, but that is a delusion, so it seems to me, for every effort after something great must be impelled by a bigger force from within, and the greater the effort, the higher the aim, often *appears* the greater the disaster or apparent failure. Failure there is none except the ceasing to try.

We observe efforts to unite religions, conferences to bring together people of different sects and religions, feeble often, and full of fear they meet, discuss superficial things, fear to plunge into the essentials, but still they meet. They struggle after unity, and that shows effort,

and shows that the need of brotherhood is felt in the hearts of all however difficult they may find it to express what is there. Every struggle makes the next one a little easier. Various brotherhoods are established, with varying and special aims, but all under the chief heading of bringing people or peoples together in closer relationship. Broadly speaking, all the struggles in the world at the present moment have this ideal at the back of them, and in front of them.

The War was a climax, but it was a struggle for freedom, and there can be no brotherhood unless there is freedom, there can be no brotherhood with any part of the nation enslaved, no universal brotherhood so long as any part of the *world* is enslaved. A glance at each nation reveals this struggle for freedom, the preliminary step to brotherhood. And after the War the struggle for peace—a prolonged struggle—in many ways a more difficult struggle, for in war there is excitement while in a struggle after peace a cool head and a determined aim are necessary, a calculating mind, and an unshakable will. The League of Nations must be cited as one of the biggest efforts after brotherhood that the world has ever known, all the nations that formed it having caught the gleam of

vision that a drawing together of the nations in one bond is the only way to prevent the cause of brotherhood from sacrilege. It aims so high that by a concerted and mighty effort alone can attainment be possible. It is an outside thing to reduce armaments; what we need is the spirit that will not use armaments if they are there. No law can make for brotherhood except the law of God, which makes a man a free man, a law unto himself.

The efforts in all countries to improve labour conditions follow in the same train; it is a struggle to make one section of the people partake of the comforts of the other section of the same people, because we know that we are brothers and one brother is not inferior to others of the same family. The effort for better wages, better housing, is all on the same tack, and so is the struggle for better health conditions and the prevention of the spread of disease from one country to another, one brother to another. All struggles for improvements in factories, in injurious trades, in sanitation, show that we recognise the rights of brotherhood and of our fellow man.

Freemasonry is a brotherhood of another type, working not at the material benefits for one and all but for the purpose of bringing together men

and women [of all nations for spiritual intercourse in a band of unity, a bond of friendship. In later days women have been dropped out, but no brotherhood can exclude either sex. Yes, it is inevitable that women shall come into their own again with reference to this mysterious Brotherhood that has come down to us through the ages and is a faint reflection of the Greater Brotherhood that we know exists in the higher worlds. There are already signs that this truth is being recognised.

Side by side with this effort after brotherhood is the effort to claim the rights of children and of animals. At our present stage it would be too great a claim to suggest that the world at large recognises that children have an equal right with grown-up people. Yet if we once come to the knowledge of the need for universal brotherhood this claim must be made, and child labour is one of the greatest evils of the present day. In a less degree would the world at large put forward a claim for animals on this basis, but in studying the law of reincarnation the Theosophist can do no less, and to my mind there can be no universal Brotherhood unless the rights of the lower kingdoms are recognised, so that we no longer talk of lower kingdoms but

Apparently one of the most difficult for us to include in a Brotherhood is the criminal. No country is an exception here, but we find a great deal of difference in the last ten or fifteen years. A beginning has been made to treat the criminal not as an outcast but as a man suffering from a form of mental disease or deficiency. In working on these lines (and there are many irons in the fire) it shows a step in the brotherhood direction. Specially are some nations realising this with reference to young offenders. Until lately the treatment meted out to them scarcely bears reading, and a gleam of light has come to us, a very faint one as yet, but still a gleam that can never be darkened. Capital punishment still exists in many countries; it is surprising to find that this is so when we can point to so many struggles towards brotherhood.

A brotherhood must mean a universal sympathy, a realisation of belonging everywhere and to everything, a common property, part of a *team*, part of one struggle, part of another's toil, part of another's aim—towards one goal—a living sense of unity that *knows* that a false step shakes the world, and a step forward raises it also and helps it upward,—ever so little, but still a little. There is no such thing as

separation ; it is delusion. When can we be alone or separated ? Neither on the earth nor under the earth nor in the heavens. We are interwoven ; *en masse* we live and toil, and *en masse* we flounder in the flood of life. If we wake up to realise this, then we make the first step towards brotherhood ; no longer I and thou but *we*, a oneness ; no one ever yet hated part of himself. Sometimes one feels restless within oneself, uncontrolled, disorganised. It is a feeling of rest that is needed, a joining up. Have you ever tried throwing yourself on the wave of the sea, resting on your back, and feeling *part of the sea* ? Have you ever tried giving up your will and your sense of separateness, and, relaxing your *all*, limbs, mind, soul, resting in the Everlasting Arms that overspread the world ? In such moments as these one realises oneness, one catches a glimpse of unity, one knows that therein lies the spirit of brotherhood. Then deeply grows the consciousness, "I and my Father are one," all Life is one ; I am part of that All Life, and I am part of God—there is no other, so all are one and God is in me.

Watch the great movements of the day, the struggle to unite, the effort to bring peace, which reveal the inward longing for rest and freedom. Yet one has to note the limitation

and how the lower nature of self is forever coming up and putting in the word "I" when it should be "we".

We may not agree with some points which have been brought forward to make divorce easier—possibly we may think there should be no divorce—be that as it may, this is all a struggle for freedom, and the fact that there is a "way out" would ensure better treatment on the one hand and more contentment on the other. Granted that this is not an ideal state, still, side by side with greater freedom, will come a better state of affairs in the marriage world. (I had almost said market.) This must inevitably show itself when women not only feel their freedom but have learned how to use it wisely and well. But I need not have stopped at the word marriage market; it is mostly a market, a buying and selling, sometimes a money transaction, sometimes diplomatic, sometimes for position, or by necessity, but rarely is it a free choice.

From one thing to another then we see the struggle for freedom on all sides, and the desire to draw together, to bring into closer touch, to understand and to join up.

In all the nations a claim for freedom is being made, but if we look closely at this claim we

find that it has restrictions and so falls short of the ideal of Brotherhood. In *The Message of the Himalayas* Paul Richard appealingly says to India :

Thou claimest equality among peoples and races, and thou wouldst not have it amongst casts! Thou shalt be the sister of all nations, only when all thy sons among themselves are brothers. . . . And all thy daughters, their sisters and equals. . . .

There is a link of destiny, close and mysterious, between women and their nation. A nation also is a woman, a mother. Whenever women are treated as slaves, the nation becomes a slave also. . . .

Seest thou these barriers, divisions, doors closed to the stranger, to the pariah, to Brother Man? Nay, for thy soul has arisen, and with her—Fraternity!

In India then, we see a claim for a partial freedom, in England a claim for partial freedom also within her domain; why partial? Because she fears to claim absolute freedom; something within her seeks to bind, and she fears to shake off every trammel, for she knows not where that freedom might land her.

The line that the pacifists took in the War was typical—they claimed freedom but forgot that everyone has a right to it, and not only they. It is an interesting study to see what constitutes a pacifists' war, especially from a

Theosophist's point of view. "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul," comes to one's mind very forcibly, for the pacifist only protests against arms made of steel or iron which kill the body, and does not protest against the dominating spirit which kills the soul and prevents brotherhood, nor does it protest against the fiery darts sent by mind or tongue which wound more than the body. Nay, a pacifist must be one who works for brotherhood, a true and faithful brother, wounding none, helping all; then can he claim Peace. But "the tongue must have lost the power to wound".

The struggle, which took place a short while ago at Genoa, has been described as a "fight to save our soul". Truly it was that and something more: it was a fight to save the soul of brotherhood. The War began this and the late struggle at Genoa shows that we are warring still; domination against equality, slavery against brotherhood.

I have said, a brotherhood must be made up of free people, with a common tie of interest, toil, suffering, or aim. First, then, we must find out what freedom means and then learn how to use it; we can only be free if our freedom is in the hands of the Inner Ruler, the God within

dominating all the bodies, or shall we say, the Higher Self mastering the lower Self. No external law can make a brotherhood; it cannot be *made*, it must come from within. A simple test can be applied, which I now suggest: "Do unto others as you would be done by." Try it in your office, in your home, in your workshop, in your play, at school or college, by day and by night, travelling, working, resting; the question is always before us: Should I like this done to me? You tell me this is childish. Yes, I know it, but we are children in one sense and not in another; in one sense we must become as little children, but in understanding we must be grown up.

Our dealings with our fellows would alter very much if this simple question were asked in our business transactions, in our schemes and plans to upset others, in our desire for position and longing to turn others out, in our petty jealousies and other smallnesses; our fear of being overlooked, not being patted on the back, it is all these minor criminalities which make up the world, and which mar the work for Brotherhood. I use the word criminality—you may find it too strong, I do not think it is—a criminal breaks a law, and we break a succes-

but law is law and there is no difference in size. Any breaking of the law of Brotherhood is criminal, for the law of Brotherhood is God's law.

A great change of attitude is embodied in the covenant of the League of Nations where a subject nation is to be looked upon as a responsibility of the country of more experience; as a younger brother that needs help as one that is weaker and needs strength for protection. That is a brother's attitude, but it is very different from the old idea of suppression, oppression, and depression, which has been the common order of the day. Home Rule is a fundamental law of Brotherhood. The beginning of "home rule" is within each man, and we have referred to it as the Inner Ruler. Home Rule is an inevitable outcome of a struggle towards Brotherhood, and the world, unknowingly, is recognising this truth, and largely unconsciously is working towards it. There is, alas, ever the ebb and flow, the move forward and a counter move to stop it—but we move forward, we progress, there is no standing still.

If we aim at Brotherhood, our idea of the functions and responsibilities of the State must alter. The State should look after everyone

and condition of all sections of the people. The people, in their turn, should give to the State the utmost of their capability in work, etc., each man and woman responsible for the well-being of others, not to *take* all he can get for himself but to *share*, no longer a condition of a superfluity of riches in one street and squalor in the next, no longer epicures in one part of the town and starvation within a stone's throw, for the rich should see that there are none starving because they have the power to prevent it. I do not mean giving in charity; I refer to the spirit of exploiting which is rife in all countries more or less. The rich exploit the poor; the clever, the ignorant; the strong, the weak. The word Brotherhood knocks this all out. A strong brother would protect the weak, the clever teach the ignorant, and the rich share with the poor.

Chivalry seems to have gone out of life; chivalry and gentlemanliness are closely allied, and there can be no brotherhood without both. Chivalry belongs to the age of knights who fought for gallantry, and who protected. A gentleman cannot hurt another by look or word; he is courteous in the extreme; he ever thinks of others and puts himself in their place—treats them accordingly. No man can be great unless he is a chivalrous gentleman. This is

the secret of working towards brotherhood. After all, we come back to the story of the Good Samaritan. The two that passed by on "the other side" were not gentlemen, but the one who poured in wine and oil and gave the sufferer of his best was worthy of the name. If we claim to belong to God's family, we expect that His family should produce gentlemen and not ruffians. It seems a long way to go, but if we all have the same aim, if we work together and act with chivalry towards each other, how light will be the load and how easy the road.

Yes, Theosophy is the great motor-power that works for Brotherhood; nothing can stop its onward course, though it may be retarded if we fail to join hands. Each religion claims that it works for Brotherhood, but each religion has failed because it will not allow the same liberty for others as it claims for itself, nor will it give the same reverence as it expects to receive. Theosophy embodies all religions, is against none, nor does it uphold any particular one as superior in any way to another, believing that all religions come from the same source, and that each has the same fundamental truths given out, in different forms suitable to a given time and place, and presented, so as to appeal to the people to whom it was revealed, at a given

stage of civilisation. Brotherhood cannot exist unless the universality of religion is recognised for on the religion is the tradition of the country, and therefore of the people, built. An understanding of the tradition is necessary to any drawing together, and wisdom is needed to understand. "My son, get wisdom, and with all thy getting, get understanding."

The fact is that so long as we fail to look at things except from our *own* standpoint so long shall we fail to see things from any one else's point of view. That is very obvious, but the time will surely come when with all the desire for brotherhood, that is manifesting itself, we should be able to work consciously and actively towards bringing people together in every way; no way is too small in which to make trial and every way is worth the attempt. We understand each other so little. It is difficult for us without bias to be able to get "into" another's point of view, be it on what subject it may. We have allowed *our selves* to loom so big in our own horizon that we shut out practically all possibility of seeing other people's horizon or even a bit of it. How much more interesting would the world be if we could put our own horizon in the background and be able to see several other

people's and many other nations' horizons. We are apt to think our little peep of the great horizon is all, whereas every one's is different, and yet each one's angle of vision is wanted to make up a whole. In nature there is nothing duplicated, no flower or leaf; each has its own individuality, and so have we; but the leaves and the flowers work in harmony and make up a beautiful tree, and we have not yet learnt to work in harmony, hence the chaos and divisions. Unity in diversity is what is wanted, both with nations and with people, and nothing short of this will make for brotherhood.

It means a great stride to bring ourselves to do to others as we would be done by, to give the same latitude in speech and in outlook as we claim for ourselves, or to claim the same right for others as we claim for ourselves. It is a big aim, but inevitable if we desire to work for brotherhood. The spirit of a common lot, a common toil, a common pain, a common joy, no joy for us unless all share it, no pleasure, but it must be others' pleasure too. If one is weary, we must partake of his weariness, if one is overburdened, we must share it so as to lighten that burden. This is no ideal to laugh at, neither is it beyond reach but must be cultivated.

Those who have trodden the path of perfection have shown us so much of the way, and as I have said previously we are on the same road and are certain of attainment if we work for it. How impossible for us to be happy in a solitary heaven, how impossible to be content to be in a "pen" with the "elect" and to know that suffering humanity is shut out, nay rather through the spirit of brotherhood all must pass in; there can be no happiness so long as one suffering creature is left outside. Those who strive to be the saviours of men will wait at the gate and see all pass in first.

Theosophy is the great hope for the world, the great bringer of hope, the teacher of hope. None ever shut out. One big family which I have called God's family, elder members within it, yes, more experienced members having attained certain knowledge, but the younger ones gradually going through their schooling and following in the steps of the elder ones and the babes being looked after and guarded in their turn. Would such a family be happy if the least one were left out? This then is the spirit of brotherhood, and must be applied in our home, in our workshop, in our town, in our district, in our nation, in all the nations; so and only so shall we realise what being "at

one" means and the meaning of "I and my Father are one".

No ideal is too great to put before ourselves, for only by following a great ideal may we hope to attain, after many lives and æons of ages. It needs perseverance, it needs determination, it needs the constant reminding of ourselves, I am not here for *myself*, but as a part of a great whole. What I do affects all, what I attain helps all, thus must I ever keep in mind that I am one of God's family and united to all.

None the less has the dream, the hope, of an enduring civilisation based on Brotherhood gilded, from time to time, the horizon of the great Saints, of the great Lovers of Humanity. Prophets have pointed to it, Poets have sung of it, Philosophers have outlined it, Martyrs have died for it; the Elder Brothers of Humanity, the great Company of the religious Teachers of the world, They shall establish it, and the Spirit of Love in which each religion has been cradled, shall brood over the maturity of the Race.

CHAPTER IX

INTERNATIONALISM

THEOSOPHY is international in so far that it belongs to no one nation, to no one people. The Divine Wisdom is for everybody who desires it. No one is disqualified if he seeks.

International means an exchange between nations, exchange of trust, confidence, understanding, and this must be mutual and will never be forced by outside treaties, it must be *won*. Each nation must win the confidence and trust of other nations, must in fact set out to win that confidence; only thus can it be mutual, built on a firm foundation and bring about understanding, cordiality and peace.

Internationalism would evidently be the outcome of brotherhood, universal brotherhood cannot exist without internationalism; yet the words are by no means interchangeable, but are dependent on each other when dealing with nations. It is impossible to imagine nations

growing in the ideal of brotherhood, working for it, aiming at it, and not desiring internationalism and working towards those relations from one nation to another which will bring about an exchange, an interchange between them that would alter the attitude of each to all other nations—to the whole world. I have said that this mutual attitude must be won; each nation must win the confidence, trust and understanding of the other nations, and this can only be done by straight and open dealing, and the first step is for public opinion to insist on open treaties and that all obligations should be made known to the public; so long as Governments, or a section of the Government, can make "hole and corner" alliances, one nation against another, so long will no nation know where it lies with reference to other nations, none will know who is his secret enemy, or perhaps I had better say who is his enemy made in secret. This has, in the past, been one of the great barriers in the way of mutual intercourse and inter-exchange from one nation to the other. No confidence is won if secrets are kept up the sleeves, neither can there be mutual understanding if each nation has kept back or hidden something or presented a front that was

In a word, this has been the hypocrisy of the past. There is a danger of the same being carried on in the present, and what is done now is going to rule the future.

The time has now come when internationalism is a possibility. Let us look back say a thousand years when the world was separate one part from another, shut up as it were into water-tight compartments, divided by distance, many lands unknown and ungetatable, when intercourse between nations was practically impossible. Wars have been the means of helping international relations. This seems a strange contradiction, but if we can imagine the world without war, we have also to imagine the world with no intercourse with other nations. After each war internationalism has spread and a desire to know more of other countries, other lands, has come out of each war. A respect for other nations has grown out of each war, for war has its place and has been necessary, nay, has been part of the evolution of the world. The greatest war is now over, and never has there been such a desire shown on all sides for a better understanding and for closer international relations.

The special work of the Theosophical Society has helped this to a large degree by the

spread of Theosophy, the spread of the idea of the oneness of life, the spread of the idea that in the search after the Divine Wisdom, barriers of caste and creed and colour do not, cannot, exist. After all this is the first step and it is a big step towards internationalism; for these barriers are what bar the road and Theosophy removes them as nothing else has done. In the Great War all the chief nations were brought together. With what result? First a feeling of oneness in aim to win the war, second, a feeling of respect to all others, a discovery on all sides that every one has his good points as well as his bad, thirdly a mutual respect for each other's religions. I think possibly this last has made the greatest impression, extraordinary as it may seem to say so. There appears to be a general discovery that up to that time the presentation of each other's religions has been falsely understood. In consequence there is a great quaking in the shoes of the dignitaries of the religion which proselytises the most, but the genuine seekers for truth have had their eyes opened; this has been rather a rude awakening. In one case the rude awakening has taken a good form, and a Society has been formed to see what is essential in the Christian Church

and how far the essentials are identical with the essentials of other religions. This Society has been formed by seventeen Chaplains who were out in the midst of the fight. This work is carried on *sub rosa*. A great deal is being done, many are joining the Society. *The Church in the Furnace* published a few years ago is well worth reading; the ideas put forth by each writer are extremely good and it is useful, more from the point of view of the wish expressed to become international in their religion, than from the wish to bring together those who are studying religion from the deeper philosophical side.

In writing of brotherhood I remarked that there were many signs that the world of to-day was seeking it both consciously and unconsciously. On all sides international relations are being pressed forward, too rapidly, apparently, for some of the nations who want to stand aside, but the result must inevitably be, that, if a nation stands out against the pressure of the stream of internationalism, it will be squashed, lifted off its feet, carried down the stream. No nation can stand against such a stream, for the time has come when co-operation, linking together, working together, unity, internationalism, oneness, no matter what you call it, *has come to stay*. It will take time,

naturally it will be challenged; that is inevitable, but the tidal wave of internationalism has started, and nobody can really stop its course. It is in the mind of every thinking man and woman in every country, some from one side, some from another. One says, that the suffering in the war has produced it; one says the slaughter, the absolute disregard of life in the war, has brought it forward; another says that the world having been brought into closer touch by means of communication has done it and he cites the discoveries of steam, electricity, wireless and "broadcasting" as milestones along the road. Be this as it may, and probably each suggestion has its place and is part of the working of God's plan in evolution, it is, at this time, in the hands of every man and woman to help internationalism forward. It is not difficult to see that we are being pushed into each other's pockets, and into closer relations with each other, and we do not quite know where we may find ourselves. Theosophy with all its many sides helps us here and points out to us how the world is being pressed forward, moulded, got ready, prepared for the coming of the Great World-Teacher.

The sun is rising on the day of internationalism, the sun is setting on the day of the

competitive system. The day for "doing" our neighbour must go; the day for working *with* him, is come. That is the situation in a word.

Do you think it by chance that international movements of all sorts are being organised in almost all countries? Nearly all of the great movements in all countries become international as if we all wanted to join "willy-nilly". A spirit is growing fast which says "You cannot keep anything to yourself, let us share."

I know the great scare of another war that we all have been through in the last few weeks, but what a marked difference there has been in the way in which it has been talked of and written about. It would appear that all are trying to postpone it by trying to work against war, quite a different attitude to ten years ago, and so far it has been prevented on a large scale, and many minor wars prevented too. You may think that these are small things to relate. But they seem to me to be big things, for they show the attitude of mind of the nations. They show that deep down war is not wanted, and still more, they show that it is preventible, and that Internationalism is becoming a principle in the minds of all the nations. That is the great step. Once each nation recognises that it has obligations to other nations,

its attitude must change and internationalism will be well on the way ; for the moment the scares of war are silenced, nations will begin to trust each other, help each other, be neighbours to each other. Comradeship in nations is necessary. Rivalry with each other must cease, and working for the good of all must take its place. What a huge task is this before us ! Each of us should follow the work and growth of one or other of the international movements, leagues or associations and see how the whole are coloured by the desire to work in friendly relations. It matters not which way you look, amongst International Labour Conferences, International Health Conferences, International Women's Conferences, International Conferences for Moral Hygiene, International Religious Conferences, or International Sports, all show the desire to link up one nation with another, to be at one, to work together, to drop separations and tear down barriers.

It is the spread of Theosophic thought that has brought this about, for Theosophy is in the air, is being "broadcasted" in the old sense of the term as well as in the new. Study it, for it solves many of the great problems of the day, and none more than this growth of

internationalism which is, as it were, a beacon set upon a hill towards which we must fix our eyes and then walk straight ahead, if indeed we would help to bring it about. There is no time to be lost, for the hour has struck. Choose the way to Internationalism or the way to greater wars; the one means bringing together in harmony and peace, and the other leads inevitably to separation and destruction.

CHAPTER X

BEGINNINGS

IN the previous three articles I have taken what we might term a very everyday outlook of Theosophy, or rather, I should say, an outlook of Theosophical thought on the things of every day. To-day I want to take altogether another aspect of it and tell you some of the things that I have found written about the beginning of life and the forms as we know them to-day. What I find seems to me to appeal to my common-sense and reason, but it does more than that, it also coincides with the story of the creation as Christians know it; differently told and explained, enlarged and widened, bereft of all its crudeness, baldness and unsatisfying nature, yes, and presented to us in a way that is not only believable but possible, likely, interesting and *alive*. We can take the description to the bar of our reason, common-sense and sense of truth, and we do not find it wanting. This is one of the great powers that Theosophy, the Divine

Wisdom has; she has, as it were, a way that explains and helps and lifts you over the ditches of doubt which in earlier days seem so very wide, nor does she do this dogmatically for there is always plenty of room left for individual thought and for working out for ourselves the suggestions given by those who know and see and feel and understand more.

In the Jewish-Christian sacred Scripture we have a story of the beginnings of things in the first chapter. If taken literally (and I am sure it was never meant to be taken literally), the story is childish, unreal, dissatisfying; but read with the light of the Divine Wisdom, you will find presented by that simple story a great truth.

In passing I must remind you that there are three ways of reading sacred Scripture. First as a child, reading literally, that is necessary to a child, and belongs to the age when priestcraft is necessary, when the priest insists that each word is to be taken literally. Secondly, as one of mature age would read whose intellect demands an explanation, and he takes it as an allegory and seeks *with the seer* the truth behind the simple story. Thirdly, as the spiritual man, the man made perfect, who reads the spiritual Truth encased in the simple story by the help of

In studying Theosophy, we find the explanation of this simple story of beginnings, and according to our own development, wisdom and knowledge shall we grasp the depths of the truth therein contained. "He that hath ears to hear let him hear."

Of the Absolute, the Infinite, the All-embracing, we can at our present stage know nothing, except that It is; we can say nothing that is not a limitation, and therefore inaccurate.

In It are innumerable universes; in each universe countless solar systems. Each solar system is the expression of a mighty Being, whom we call the Logos, the Word of God, the Solar Deity. He is to it all that men mean by God. He permeates it; there is nothing in it which is not He; it is the manifestation of Him in such matter as we can see. Yet He exists above it and outside it, living a stupendous life of His own among His Peers.

In a western Scripture it says:

One God, and Father of all Who is above all and through all and in you all.

In an eastern Scripture it says:

Having permeated this whole universe with one fragment of Myself, I remain.

Of His Higher Life we know nothing. That is far beyond us, but of the fragment of His Life which vivifies and energises His System, we may know something as presented or shown

manifestation. We do not see Him, but we may see His power at work, His force working through these lower manifestations.

If there was ever a beginning of the universe, it is beyond our ken; for beginnings and endings are terms of limitation, it is impossible to imagine a beginning of the Absolute, the All-embracing, seeing that He is omniscient, omnipresent, omnipotent, and the chapter in Genesis to which I have referred does not suggest a beginning here. All religions have expressed and imaged Him as a Trinity, Three in One and One in Three; fundamentally One with three Aspects. All the three Aspects being concerned with the solar system as well as with other systems and with the evolution of man.

The Word, Sound, Breath, Impulse—expression of the Will—is a suggestion put forth to us of the change which brought about our solar system and light and darkness were separated, making thereby a beginning.

“And the evening and the morning were the first day,” is the poetic but pregnant phrase used in the Bible. Successive impulses of force sent out from time to time mark “days,” vast periods of time.

The making of these extends over a long period of ages, and they are made in a certain definite

order by the interaction of several forces, as is correctly indicated in Sir William Crookes' paper on "The Genesis of Elements". Indeed the process of their making is not even now concluded.

These impulses of life of the Third Aspect of the Deity are called in the Christian interpretation, the Giver of Life, the Spirit of God "that moved on the face of the waters".

When the worlds had been prepared to this extent, and most of the chemical elements already existed, the second outpouring of life took place, and this came from the Second Aspect of the Deity. It brought with it the power of combination. In all the worlds it found existing what may be thought of as elements corresponding to those worlds. It proceeded to combine those elements into organisms which it then ensouled, and in this way it built up the seven kingdoms of nature.

Theosophy recognises seven kingdoms of nature, man as separate from the animal kingdom. In each of these kingdoms the life not only passes a period of time which to us seems incredibly long, but it goes through a course of evolution in that kingdom beginning with the lowest manifestation and ending with the highest. As the *Text Book of Theosophy* tells us:

In the vegetable kingdom, for example, the life-force might commence its career by occupying grasses or mosses and end it by ensouling magnificent forest trees. In the animal kingdom it might commence with mosquitoes or with animalculæ,

and might end with the finest specimens of the mammalia.

The whole process is one of steady evolution from lower forms to higher, from the simpler to the more complex. But what is evolving is not primarily the form, but the life within it. The forms also evolve and grow better as time passes; but this is in order that they may be appropriate vehicles for more and more advanced waves of life. When the life has reached the highest level possible in the animal kingdom, it may then pass on into the human kingdom.

The outpouring leaves one kingdom and passes to another, so that if we had to deal with only one wave of this outpouring we could have in existence only one kingdom at a time. But the Deity sends out a constant succession of these waves, so that at any given time we find a number of them simultaneously in operation. We ourselves represent one such wave; but we find evolving alongside us another wave which ensouls the animal kingdom — a wave which came out from the Deity one stage later than we did. We find also the vegetable kingdom, which represents a third wave, and the mineral kingdom, which represents a fourth; and occultists know of the existence all round us of three elemental kingdoms, which represent the fifth, sixth and seventh waves. All these, however, are successive ripples of the same great outpouring from the Second Aspect of the Deity.

Here we have a wonderful scheme of beginnings beautifully described which suggests to us how the Divine Life involves a fragment of Itself more and more deeply in matter.

In order that through that matter it may receive vibrations which could not otherwise affect

it, impacts from without by degrees arouse within it rates of undulation corresponding to their own, so that it learns to respond to them. Later on it learns of itself to generate these rates of undulation and so becomes a being possessed of spiritual powers.

How reasonable and how simple does this great process seem when put before us in this way, neither does the simplicity of the telling take away from it one iota of the vastness and greatness of the scheme. "The evening and the morning" become long stretches of time and the "days," æons and ages, and the seven classes, the seven divisions, the seven periods remain, in some way there is borne in upon us the truth that the number seven is the inevitable, unalterable law in our system.

To a certain extent (though not entirely) we have so far referred to the beginnings of forms, bodies, but each man is a soul though not each animal or plant. As a soul, man manifests only through one body at a time, whereas one animal soul (called the group soul) manifests through several separate animal bodies simultaneously. A plant soul also manifests through a number of separate plants. A group soul is as it were a mass which provides the soul for many other animals of the same type. For instance, if a horse dies, his soul, separated only for a time, goes back into

the mass, and this mass is what we call the group soul. Not so with man, for if man dies, his soul lays aside his physical body, but he remains, that is, his soul remains, as it was before, an entity separate from all other entities.

To the group soul is attached a number of other horses' bodies. It has been suggested a hundred or more. While his physical body is alive, each horse uses, say a hundredth part of that group soul, and in so far as he uses that, he is a separate entity for the time being, but this is not permanent as in man. When the horse dies, his part of the group soul goes back and joins the remaining group soul and becomes one with it again, but the identical part can never again be separated. To take a simple analogy made by Bishop C. W. Leadbeater, we shall imagine the group soul as represented by a bucket of water and the hundred horses by a hundred tumblers. As each tumbler is dipped in, it takes out a tumbler of water which is separate for the time being as the horse is a separate soul and is temporarily separated from the bucket of water and from the other tumblers of water. In pouring back the water into the bucket, it represents the death of the horse. You never again can separate the same any one tumbler of water. There is

one point here to which I want to draw your careful attention. The water in each tumbler that is returned is not quite the same as when it went out. It is coloured with the experience that the horse has gained in its life. Each tumbler is coloured with possibly different experiences. None in any case would be exactly the same, and this colour is mixed up, distributed in the whole of the bucketful of water, the qualities developed and the experience gained by each horse being shared by the whole of the group soul. Each tumblerful taken out of the bucket in the future will be coloured by what has been put in, but it will never be exactly the same water in any tumbler, each horse's experience being the common property of all that group of horses represented by the bucket.

This is, in fact, the explanation of inherited instinct; for surroundings, altered habitat, make no difference to inherited instinct, and as is well known in the cases where eggs have been changed and ducks hatched by an artificial hen mother, in each case the birds retain the instinct of their own kind.

Lower down in the scale of animals and in insect life, millions of insects, we are told, are attached to a single group soul, and that of the vegetable life the same may be said. This

appears to be an economy of nature, for each insect, each plant, each animal does not go through every experience, but is able thus to share it with its own kith and kin.

Group-souls at any level or at all levels arrange themselves into seven great types, according to the Minister of the Deity through whom their life has poured forth. These types are clearly distinguishable in all the kingdoms, and the successive forms taken by any one of them form a connected series, so that animals, vegetables, minerals and the varieties of the elemental creatures may all be arranged into seven great groups, and the life coming along one of those lines will not diverge into any of the others.

No detailed list has yet been made of the animals, plants or minerals from this point of view; but it is certain that the life which is found ensouling a mineral of a particular type will never vivify a mineral of any other type than its own, though within that type it may vary. When it passes on to the vegetable and animal kingdoms it will inhabit vegetables and animals of that type and no other; and when it eventually reaches humanity it will individualise into men of that type and of no other.

Individualisation is the breaking away from the group soul and becoming a separate entity; is possible only for domestic animals and only for certain kinds of these; for the life wave spends a long time in each kingdom and evolution is a very slow (as we count time) process. In the case of domestic animals it is to lovers of

animals a delightful study to watch the growth and development of a particular pet until sometimes it has been said that a dog, cat or horse knows as much as a human being and is frequently extremely sensitive, knowing and even anticipating his master's wishes. It is the emotions and thoughts of a man acting constantly upon the already highly developed animal which tend to raise the animal "altogether out of touch with the group to which it belongs, so that his fragment of a group-soul becomes capable of responding to the outpouring which comes from the first aspect of the Deity".

This fragment of the group-soul becomes then in its turn a separate soul, a vehicle ensouled by the Divine spark which has fallen into it from above. This is the breaking away from the group-soul and is the beginning of a separate soul or ego. The separate soul marks the distinction between the highest animal and the lowest man. It also marks another "day" in the story of the creation, another "evening and morning," another beginning for that entity.

The same process goes on in the lower grades, the distinction there being the difference in the numbers that belong to or are contained in a

group-soul, each development marking a stage, a day in the history of evolution.

Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall to the ground without your Father knoweth it. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

CHAPTER XI

CONSTITUTION OF MAN

THEOSOPHY is a philosophy. It deals with the past, present, and future of man. With the present, by describing what man really is as shown and seen by means of the faculties developed; with the past history of man, how in the course of evolution he has grown to be what he now is; and of the future, there is much to be said, for, is not the future a reflection of the past, a mirror in which past and present determine what shall be.

Theosophy speaks of man as being a soul and having a body. This reverses the usual, common or garden idea that man is a body and possesses a soul. On this one sentence hinges the change of a whole sequence of ideas, for, in determining what man is, you determine his future and you look into his past. If a man *is* a body and possesses a soul, he belongs to one life only, and his past, present and future lie here in his physical body and end at death, the disintegration

of that body; but, if by the light of Theosophy, you determine that *he is a soul*, then you must look back to the development of evolution and the beginning of that soul, and you naturally look forward to try and understand what that soul may become; the effect of doing this suggests rebirth, continuity of life. The possession of the body is in this last case a very minor thing. For at most it means a sheath of short duration, say, a life time, a sheath that makes the form in which dwells the greater part of the entity.

I have said that Theosophy is a gospel of hope, inspiration; it gives zest to "move on," to get forward with work, and its ideals press you on; for the vastness of its plan, its great scheme of evolution is such that it receives a response which seems to answer in this way; "Yes, I must get on and help too, I must let Them count on me, I must help suffering humanity to shake off its chains, I must not be idle for a moment, and so on and so on."

There are three great facts which Theosophy has to lay before humanity. They have been summed up under three main heads:

There are three truths which are absolute, and which cannot be lost, but yet may remain silent for lack of speech.

The soul of man is immortal, and its future is the future of a thing whose growth and splendour has no limit.

The principle which gives life dwells in us and without us, is undying and eternally beneficent, is not heard or seen or smelt, but is perceived by the man who desires perception.

Each man is his own absolute lawgiver, the dispenser of glory or gloom to himself; the decreer of his life, his reward, his punishment.

These truths, which are as great as is life itself, are as simple as the simplest mind of man.

Put shortly, and in the language of the man of the street, this means that God is good, that man is immortal, and that as we sow so we must reap. There is a definite scheme of things; it is under intelligent direction and works under immutable laws. Man has his place in this scheme and is living under these laws. If he understands them and co-operates with them, he will advance rapidly and will be happy; if he does not understand them—if, wittingly or unwittingly, he breaks them, he will delay his progress and be miserable. These are not theories, but proved facts.

We spoke last week of the development of the group-soul of the animals, and we spoke of the difference of that group-soul from the individual soul which each man is. For man's soul is a vehicle itself ensouled by that Divine Spark which falls into it from on high.

It is the breaking away from the rest of the group-soul and developing a separate ego which marks the distinction between the highest animal and the lowest man.

Man is, therefore, in essence a spark of the Divine Fire. This Divine Spark has been called by several names, Inner Ruler, the God Within, Conscience, the Monad, Spirit of God within you, the Voice within, etc., etc. All these names describe it. It is for the purpose of human evolution that the Monad manifests itself in the lower worlds and takes a human form. It has been said that man has seven bodies. It is true, but the title is misleading, and yet it is difficult to call them by any other name than body. The following is a very simple illustration. It was a helpful one to me. If you throw a stone into a pond, it will cause a succession of ripples on the surface of water, let us say, seven, this suggested to me the seven bodies; the centre, let us imagine where the stone is dropped, is the Monad and the ripple or response sends a message outwards to the seven bodies or vehicles, the physical being the outside one. Another illustration can be given by a toy which is very often seen, a succession of wooden eggs each fitted within the other, getting, of course, smaller and smaller in size, until within the last or smallest you may find the jewel, the pearl of great price. These bodies interpenetrate. They are stages in one sense, but not to be approached

by steps as if you go up a ladder, for the terms "up and down" are entirely inappropriate, for each body is really within each.

Thus man as we know him, though in reality a Monad residing in the monadic world, shows himself as an ego in the higher mental world, manifesting these three aspects of himself (Spirit, Intuition and Intelligence) through that vehicle of higher mental matter which we name the causal body.

This ego is the man during the human stage of evolution; he is the nearest correspondence, in fact, to the ordinary unscientific conception of the soul. He lives unchanged (except for his growth) from the moment of individualisation until humanity is transcended and merged into divinity. He is in no way affected by what we call birth and death; what we commonly consider as his life is only a day in his life. The body which we can see, the body which is born and dies, is a garment which he puts on for the purposes of a certain part of his evolution.

In our present stage of evolution we are not able to contact consciously all these bodies, the three higher, or, shall I call them more refined, more ethereal, being beyond our present knowledge, touch and conscious contact.

The idea of man as body, soul and spirit is not to me misleading nor does it in any way conflict with the idea of the seven, the three higher belonging to the world of spirit and the lower four to the soul and body (I still use the term higher and lower, I cannot get away from it in

our terminology). The use of these bodies is, I think, easy of understanding. They function in different ways on different planes, and each gains experiences which are of use to the Monad. These bodies are also necessary as connections in the several worlds. We know by experience, for instance, that the physical body is only of use in the physical world and that we cannot use it in other realms nor can we manifest in the physical world without it. The physical body is, therefore, our best instrument on the physical plane and should be treated and respected accordingly. It is the form for the manifestation of the Divine Spark, and to look down upon it or abuse it is to desecrate that which is of divine origin. To desecrate it is to "sin against the Holy Ghost".

Know ye not that ye are the Temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

We need the physical body here, for in the physical world that is the only instrument by which we can gain experience and get training. The greatest care should be taken of this instrument to keep it pure, clean, healthy, strong, vigorous, a fit channel for the manifestation for that which is Divine. We should endeavour to make it as perfect as possible, perfect in form, in gesture, even in clothing, for the pride in

looking after the body should have behind it the pride of having a treasure in our charge through which the Divine Fire can work in this world. This idea makes us very responsible and alters very essentially the attitude to our body which should be to us our greatest help on the physical plane and our obedient servant. If the care of the body was studied carefully and with this idea, we find ourselves at once in a very different world to the ordinary man of the street. For the higher the place we give to the body the more shall we treat it with respect and honour. We should find it impossible to break a law which affects the body, impossible to give it impure food or food for sensual pleasure, impossible to give it any but the best conditions for work.

Other bodies likewise function in their own worlds or planes, and most of us are actually unaware of any function except the physical. Yet there are some of us who have glimpses of "beyonds," vague though these glimpses may be.

Three of those bodies, physical, astral and mental, are assumed for one life-time only, the higher bodies being permanent. When functioning in this physical world, man remembers by means of the mental body, but as that is a new

one, it does not contain memories of past lives or rebirths as it had had no part in them, but man's ego, in his world of the Intuition does remember, and sometimes a partial recollection filters through from the ego into the lower vehicles. Although man does not usually remember his past lives in his physical body, yet he manifests in his physical life the experiences and lessons that he has gained in former lives and necessarily shows forth by his character the qualities that have been builded into his character and developed in former lives. If he has built in good qualities, he will possess them now. If he has let himself drift or been careless, then that carelessness will show itself by continued weakness of character. The qualities good or bad with which he is born are those which he has built into himself. "Whatsoever a man sows that shall he also reap." Thus this process goes on life after life and age after age.

This development of the ego is the object of the whole process of materialisation ; he assumes those veils of matter precisely because through them he is able to receive vibrations to which he can respond, so that his latent faculties may thereby be unfolded. Though man descends from on high into these lower worlds, it is only through that descent that a full cognisance of the higher worlds is developed in him. Full consciousness in any given world

involves the power to perceive and respond to all the undulations of that world; therefore the ordinary man has not yet perfect consciousness at any level—not even in this physical world which he thinks he knows.

Owing to lack of development, man is only partially conscious in this world. It has always seemed to me that it is this partial consciousness that makes one feel only partly belonging here as if some part of us were somewhere else, and this is perfectly true. "Our citizenship is in heaven" is true if we understand by that, that we belong elsewhere and are merely travelling towards our own kingdom. The word "heaven" has been so misused that I hesitate to use it, but I mean it to suggest the place where we are all "at one," where we know no separation, where we shall see each other face to face without mask.

The causal body is the permanent vehicle of the ego in the higher mental world. In ordinary people, we are told, that it is not yet active or awakened; but as the ego unfolds his latent possibilities through the long stages and process of evolution, by the experiences gained and lessons learnt on the physical plane, it gradually is brought into action, which means that the higher matter is brought into action. Only as man becomes more and more perfect is

the causal body more and more developed. When it is developed to its highest extent, that man becomes an Adept. In the *Textbook of Theosophy* to which I have previously referred, the causal body is very clearly described. Indeed it is difficult to write of the constitution of man in a short article such as this with any clearness, for there is so much to be said and so much that one must inevitably leave out. I would however remind you that these short articles are only meant to bring certain facts before you hoping that further study will be prompted from yourselves.

A very interesting branch of the subject is the study of the power of thought on our own bodies and on those of other people.

Every thought of a definite character such as a thought of affection or hatred, of devotion or suspicion, of anger or fear, of pride or delusion, not only creates a form but also radiates an undulation.

This radiation travels in all directions and may contact another mental body in a passive or receptive condition and communicate to it something of its own vibrations. In ordinary speech we call this "catching another's thought". This process goes on all the world over, and will continue to do so until we have

learnt to control our thoughts and bring them into subjection ; a practice which few of us have even thought about, much less tried to acquire. In realising that our thoughts are not our own but sent broadcast all over the world to be picked up by any receiver which can take hold of them, we get rather a start, a disagreeable awakening, for too well do we know that our thoughts are not always those which we should wish to share even with our best and dearest. I do not, of course, mean that other people whom I have called receivers are aware where the thought comes from, but that each thought has its power, and its influence is a very potent fact. Any person who habitually thinks pure, good and strong thoughts is a power for good in the world, and is of immense use to his neighbours who may be able to respond unconsciously to his uplifting thoughts ; but it works both ways, and if the thoughts are of the contrary nature, the influence is the same and proportionately he makes it more difficult for his neighbour to think and produce thoughts of love and purity.

Man is a complex being within and without, and he cannot separate himself from his fellows. This makes life another complexity, for our dependence on and our association with each

other is a thing that we take little account of. The more we study the Divine Wisdom the more is this brought home to us. No man belongs to himself, but he is of God, and all are one. So much so that what one does, affects all, and what one *is*, affects all; any attainment raises ever so slightly the whole world, and any slipping back retards it in the same degree. This is the meaning of the inspiring thought of an ancient prayer :

. That they may be one, as Thou, Father, art
in me and I in Thee,
That they also may be One in Us.

CHAPTER XII

OUR PURPOSE IN LIFE

THE world as we see it seems divided into two sets of people. Those who know that there is a purpose in life, and those who do not know; and these two sets are easily to be seen, easily to be distinguished. One set is out for a "good time" for himself; the other is out to help humanity irrespective of self in many varying ways. The one helps God in His plan of evolution, that is, to unite, to bring together, to gather into Himself, the other knows no cohesion, no co-operation, is separative and makes for separation and works against His plan. In a word, one works for *it*-self, the other for *the* Self.

You may think that this is a very arbitrary demarcation; but when we see in everyday life how it works out, I think you will agree that it is not so far-fetched as possibly appears on the surface. The line of demarcation is the attitude to life as a whole; shall I work to

please myself, or shall I serve humanity? are the two courses. The one who has caught a glimpse that life is no haphazard chance but has a purpose, is in fact an opportunity for each to be, to live, to grow, to evolve, to expand, to return to God with knowledge of that return with knowledge of the immensity of what that union must mean, treads that long, long path which to us seems almost endless. He has freedom to act as he pleases, help where he pleases and grows accordingly, realising that the long road is one of progress and of evolution, and he is able to live in the joy of that purpose, knowing that the greater his progress the greater is his power to help and to be of service in the Divine Plan. In progressing, he forgets himself utterly, and in working for others he realises the Divine Spark as the God within and seeks to be a true expression by which that Divine Spark can work. In this he expresses God's Will and is working with God's Will, is a blessing to himself and to all with whom he comes in contact. His constant thought is to help and work for others, his eyes are fixed on that aim alone, his time, money, opportunities are all turned to that account. He passes often as one misunderstood, for he is one of a minority as the world is now, and the road

he has chosen is sparsely populated, and it has lonely stretches on it. He can do no otherwise, for this Divine Spark has awakened within him a surety of purpose, and there is no going back, for once he has seen the light, darkness can never be so black, for there is the remembrance of that light, even if it is shadowed for awhile. He cannot join in the pettinesses and frivolities of the world around him.

The one who has not caught a glimpse of the purpose of life has altogether another vision, to him life is a sporting ground of pleasure for himself, to amass money, to seek pleasures, to gather gains, to enjoy life, to get on, these are his aims, and they are all centred in himself. It is true that he may do kindnesses on the way, but the kindness to others is subsidiary to his struggle for self enjoyment. That is the great difference, and if one had to go, it would be the thought of others that would be pushed out in the struggle for his personal self. To this class belong also all those who have scarcely a thought beyond animal pleasure. It sometimes appears that these last are slipping back, but in reality it is not so, for there is never a man in whom the Divine Spark is dead or even totally eclipsed, and in the apparently most depraved lie the same

possibilities to attain, the same latent powers to achieve.

In the practical world, in the study of character, this is very marked ; take, for instance, the habitual drunkard who will squander all his money at the expense of starving his wife and children, yet, often the kindest heart is hidden under the mask which for the time being he has allowed the passion for drink to dominate. His attitude to life has been to enjoy himself, and nothing but a changed attitude, to think of serving some one else than himself, will make him alter. Still, therein is the possibility that must be awakened, if not in this life then in a future one, for this change of attitude is the turning point in our long chain of lives. You may call it by many names, but it is an awakening to the fact that there is no separation, that life is not a possession but is a great charge of which he must give account, that no one can live for himself alone, for all life is one and we belong to each other, and that what one is matters to and affects others. This change has been called conversion, discrimination of the real from the unreal, you may call it what you please, but one day each one of us has to face this change, which is an awakening, and we do not always like to be

awakened. It is a day of reckoning, the day when one touches the bed rock, for one has to get to the bottom of things and discriminate the gold from the dross. That is the day when we ask ourselves, "Has life a purpose?" It is the turning point of working for ourselves or for working with the Self; those who have come to that point can never turn back. How thankful one should feel when that point is reached, when one realises that through all the pain and struggle of life that the law of action and reaction is unalterable, that one has to work through the maze life after life, and that in future lives we may be of use instead of a clog, an inspiration, possibly, in the dim future to others instead of a nonentity. "Therefore he who wishes to reform the world must first of all reform himself."

Out of Himself He has called this mighty system into being. We who are in it are evolving fragments of His life, Sparks of His Divine Fire; from Him we all have come; into Him we shall return.

Many have asked why He has done this; why He has emanated from Himself all this system; why He has sent us forth to face the storms of life. Many philosophers have speculated on this point and many suggestions have been made. The most beautiful that I know is that of a Gnostic philosopher:

God is Love, but Love itself cannot be perfect unless it has those upon whom it can be lavished

and by whom it can be returned. Therefore He put forth of Himself into matter, and He limited His glory, in order that through this natural and slow process of evolution we might come into being; and we in turn according to His will are to develop until we reach even His own level, and then the very love of God itself will become more perfect, because it will then be lavished on those, His own children, who will fully understand and return it, and so His great scheme will be realised and His Will be done.

Theosophy, ever the Gospel of hope, points out to us the hope, the possibilities, open to all, and in theorising on these two sets of people it is plainly to be seen that behind these two sets is the inevitable law of reincarnation, and it is only a matter of experience by many lives and a determined struggle that will help the one set of people to realise that which they do not see to-day. As the child knows no responsibility at a very tender age, so is it with the young souls. Responsibility comes with age and experience, and as Theosophists, we count age by life's experience, and not by years in the physical world. We all learn, some of us know why, and some have not that knowledge, and in that lies all the difference. The moment the boy at school wakens up to the fact that knowledge is desirable, that he wants to attain, that he wishes to learn and to know, his study can no longer be a burden, no longer a trial, his attitude is changed,

he knows that life for him has a purpose. It is so with the spiritual world in a wider sense, we are apt to be so vague about another life, and to think and act and believe that this is life, all that there is of life, this short span here on this physical plane, for we act, we plan, we work as if it were. We claim another belief it is true, but that is half-hearted and very sleepy, but when we awaken to the fact that this life is but a fleeting moment in the sands of time, that it is but a flash in the great light of Eternity, how differently shall we act, how different will our outlook be.

With heart and mind centred on this one little life, do we feel it worth while to plan for the future of others? Is not this the cause why we have such limited vision in all our plans—plans made for the day, not for posterity, schemes laid for to-day, and to-morrow left to take care of itself. Picture for a moment the difference in the vision of our statesmen, our scientists, or any of our pioneers if they grasped the vastness of God's evolution; but at the moment a large majority work for one life time only, and the future is too vague to plan for, or think of. Is it that they do not believe in a future? Yet very few would allow that, for all religions have taught of the future, all religions have

taught reincarnation, for it was only in the fourth century that it was decided to eliminate that doctrine from the Christian religion. No, it seems to me if we would work consistently for the future, we must be awake to the purpose of life, to the idea that we belong not to ourselves but to God, that His Plan is evolution, that we must work with His Plan, that we are all at one in that Plan, and to work against His purpose or His plan is inevitably to break ourselves.

The race has been throughout the desire of the Eternal Heart, His purpose from the beginning is to bring it to Himself.

What hope, what joy fills our whole being, when we realise that we can be of use, that God needs us, and that He cannot fulfil His purpose without our aid ! Does not that thought fire us to fresh endeavour, to greater vigour, to renewed effort, to uttermost loyalty in our purpose in life ?

CHAPTER XIII

DEATH

DURING the war the title of a lecture or a book that attracted the greatest number was the title which spoke of death or after-death conditions. Why? It is true that several thousands of young, vigorous lives were being hurled into the Hereafter. But—and this always seems to me a big “but”—hundreds go daily when there is no war, and the one certain thing to all of us, young or old, rich or poor, is that we must inevitably pass the portal of death one day. Had we never thought of death till the war? Had we never faced the possibility which is a certainty; or had we pushed it from us as something we might possibly avoid if we ignored it sufficiently?

Be this as it may, it was very marked how child-like was the determination to find out something of death conditions during the war, yes, child-like in its simplicity as if the thought of it had only just occurred. Since the war and some of its effects are passing,

the craze for this title is also passing, and the pendulum swings rather the other way in the desire to put death out of our mind. It has always seemed to me so absurd to call it morbid because one speaks of death and because one desires to know something of that passing over, which to many of us must mean a new life, a turning point in the long chain of lives. The fact, of course, is that to very many of us this physical body represents life, life here on the physical plane as the totality of life and the end of life. We may not say this in so many words, but our actions, our thoughts and words prove it to be so. Our attitude to death will be guided by our attitude to this life, *if* we believe this to be the one and only life in which we swim or sink, and in which we have our one chance to gain a heaven or a hell, then indeed is death a dire disaster, for in it all hope is gone, all chance lost, if so be that we have failed to make the best of our opportunities here. Who in fact has ever accomplished that? But if, as the Divine Wisdom points out, the life here is but a short span in the long list of lives of eternity, and death is but the shedding of an outer garment, then is death almost a relief, for, are not very many of

do not many of us feel young and vigorous inside, but cannot get our physical bodies to do all the work our spirit would fain do? Death to the ego is but the shedding of an outer coat, nothing more, for the ego realises that it is only a part of itself that manifests in the physical body and the greater part is not yet called into being or able to manifest in a physical body.

In death this sheath is laid aside for a while, the physical body disintegrates, and in due course a new body is born to enable the ego to gain more experience in another life. It is the false sense of separation that causes death to appear to be such a tragedy. We long for the physical presence, because we are such babes in experience that we have not realised that the physical plane is in one sense the least part of our existence though a necessary one to complete our evolution because there are some lessons which can only be learnt on the physical plane. In our summing up of values, we are turned upside down, the most material and therefore the lowest manifestation we claim as the highest and most important. We live, as it were, for the physical only, so it is natural that death looms large in our midst. If this life were indeed all, then we are in a bad and hopeless state; in reality it is the smallest part.

Most of us sleep about seven or eight hours a day taking but little account of the hours spent thus; they are as important as the hours of our waking consciousness. As a rule we do not bring back our experience on the astral plane, which is where we spend our time in sleep, yet there are many instances of work done there, the remembrance of which has been brought through to the waking consciousness. Sometimes there is a partial bringing back into consciousness, the result being a jumbled up dream with little or no meaning, but not unfrequently, what we call dreams are real happenings on the astral plane. Our interpretations may often be incorrect, seeing that we are apt to colour happenings there by physical sight, hearing, etc., this is from want of experience and knowledge, but there are possibilities of training ourselves, so that we can bring back more clearly the happenings when we are out of the body in sleep.

When a man falls asleep, he withdraws in his astral body, leaving the whole of the physical vehicle behind him. When he dies, he draws out with him the etheric part of the physical body, and consequently has usually at least a moment of unconsciousness while he is himself freeing from it. Some men succeed in shaking themselves free of this etheric envelope in a few moments; others rest within it for hours, days or even weeks.

What is the difference between sleep and death? The one is temporary, the cord is not severed from the physical body in sleep; in death, that cord is severed, but the place that we go to in sleep and for a certain time, at any rate, in death is the same. There is no new feeling of separation at a natural death, for has not death ever been called "the long sleep"? The sooner we rid ourselves of the awfulness of death, the fear of death, the better shall we be prepared when the change comes. It always seems to be a pity to fear to talk of it in a healthy, natural way, as we would talk of a journey that we are certain to make, say, to the other side of the globe. Children should be brought up in the idea that birth and death are natural processes as indeed we are shown daily in nature by winter and summer, by spring and autumn, and by sowing and harvesting, by light and darkness and day and night, these are all symbolical of life and death, birth and rebirth, death and resurrection. We talk so much of death and forget that resurrection, rebirth is just as inevitable. I am reminded of the beautiful service that took place in St. Paul's, London, in memory of the members of the Royal Artillery that passed over in the war. The bugle, "the Last Post," was sounded in the west the place of

the going down, "crossing the valley". A silence then took place for three minutes and great was the stillness, then the "reveillé" was sounded in the east the place from whence the light and rebirth come. The impression made was very lasting, but somehow it is a strange thought that we ever need reminding of Life to come, seeing that all the religions of the world have taught of death and rebirth, as if one were consequent on the other, and death and resurrection as part of each other. Am I not justified in saying that now-a-days there seems little living faith in a resurrection? It has almost become a belief in *form*. It is just one of our idiosyncrasies that we do not like to talk of these things. Why not? If true, it can but do good, if false, then let it be proclaimed as impossible, and we know where we stand; but within ourselves, I believe within every one of us, there is a conviction that life most certainly follows death in some form or other.

To some it is the greatest comfort to dream of one they love who has passed on, of having seen him happy and enjoying peace. To others—and there *are* a few—I have heard that the one who passed on came to visit them, either stood before them or smiled at them. To those who have doubted of life beyond death, this has been

a great source of comfort; but to those who have studied the Divine Wisdom, this outside comfort has been unnecessary, for Theosophy shows us clearly—it has no two ways—it makes it quite certain beyond all doubt that the life in the physical body is but a small part of the real life, and that Life is in the Eternal and Everlasting.

It has often been said that Theosophists are very hard, but speaking of death as a passing on, in this way, is not hard. It does not mean that you do not miss the one you care for, from your side, in the same way as you would miss him if he took a far journey which would not bring him back in this life time. *But that is all* The one who has passed on is nearer in spirit probably understands more and sees more and understands you better and is therefore nearer. Does not this thought raise us, help us and fill us with hope?

After death there may be a period of rest, gathering together of the forces, a sorting of the experiences gained, and according to the stage of evolution will the time between rebirth vary more or less. It has been said that several hundreds of years is usual to the average man between each incarnation, but we have also been told that the time varies very considerably.

The recognition of friend to friend after death is a great puzzle, I know, to many. There may not be individual recognition, but does that matter? Some may find this a difficult saying, but consider dispassionately with me one instance; say a much loved child dies when he is very young, when the parents are young, the loss has made a deep impression upon them, but other children have been born, and it is even possible that the ego of the first child may have returned, in such an instance the recognition may be *here*. I feel very strongly that we should not be bound by any idea of recognition in this sense, because physically speaking it would be impossible for the very young child to recognise its parents who may have lived on here and become very old people. Take as another instance the case of a husband and wife, the wife may have died very young and the husband may have lived on to old age and probably remarried. It is *the inner tie*, the tie between the two souls that lives. It is the love of soul to soul, love that is immortal and is recognised on through the ages, and accounts for the sudden and unbreakable friendships that are often formed, and the unaccountable recognition, sometimes without a word being spoken,

but which is found in a glance. We speak of love at first sight, but is not that a recognition from the past, a recognition of soul, and does it not appeal to you as something much bigger and greater than the idea of people standing in rows on the "other side" waiting to meet their friends who pass over from this world? It is a much more beautiful idea, and does away with any idea of severance, for the cord that binds them is one of affection and love which can never be broken. Love never fails and never dies, it is immortal, its bond is unbreakable, that is its test. There is no pretence, no counterfeit, it is unbreakable if genuine; easily broken if anything else.

Is not death then mostly a relief, a new beginning, an opportunity for a fresh start and for a new workable body to those whose body is a clog and a rest for those who are tired? The actual passing which so many seem to dread, is very beautiful also to many, and so often we have heard and known that those who pass over are taken care of and a figure is seen by them as if waiting to hold their hand and show them the way. These things are no imagination, they are the things that are real and true and living. We can rest assured that those who pass on go also to a

fuller knowledge and therefore gain a greater grasp of the meaning of life both here and there. The thought of death taken dispassionately is most helpful, just as after a tired day we look forward to a night of rest, so after a full and vigorous life as the body gets wearied shall we look forward to death when we shall be renewed with fresh vigour, with sure and certain hope of a new life, rebirth, resurrection and in due course to still fuller life, greater knowledge—freedom, illumination and union with the Divine.

This is part of the gospel of Theosophy—the certainty of this sublime future for all. It is certain because it is here already, because to inherit it we have only to fit ourselves for it.

CHAPTER XIV

SELF-DEDICATION

I HAVE spoken in an earlier article of the Purpose of Life, how in the course of many lives the turning point comes when we each have to ask ourselves what we are out for, and I reminded you that the answer has to be met and a reply given. From that day our attitude changes, for one comes face to face with oneself for a reason, and the inner man demands, nay, insists on an answer. It is a painful process, this day of reckoning, if so it can be called; we would evade it at the time if we could, but later, we are thankful to have passed it and to be on the road to choose the real from the unreal, and we ask to be lead from death to immortality, from darkness to light. But the uphill climbing only starts there. We have come down, if so I can express it, very many steps in different lives to touch the bed rock of materialism and the steps are steep and the climb will be stiff that will take us to the

mountain of the eternal snow, to the mountain where dwells the Pure Being, to the mountain where the air is rarefied, refined and purified. But we jump from one extreme to another, and I want to go slowly with you from the turning point and take with you the next step. In some ways it is, I think, the most difficult. To those who are at the bottom of the mountain the way up looks hopelessly steep, and though one has chosen to start, one's feet are unsteady, and the tendency is to cast a longing glance back to where the road was easier.

At the moment that one becomes aware of the possible climb to the mountain top, the idea of self-dedication is born. And life becomes a series of dedications. At the beginning one does not understand the way to give, to dedicate, to offer sacrifice. At first they are but outward forms, done at duty's call and with half-heartedness one offers one's work. That is a poor sort of imitation of Self-dedication; but it is a beginning. Self-dedication comes out of a long, long experience of character building and in no other way. We begin to work at building our character the moment we realise that we belong to something greater than ourselves,—that we do not belong to ourselves, that we are needed, that we can be of use. It

is the kindest and most helpful thing to make every one feel that he is needed, that we cannot get on without him. In a way that is what happens to us. We realise that we are part of a great whole, and the real *esprit de corps* is awakened in us, and we know that we have our part to play. It is then, and only then, that we begin to look at ourselves and we start to build up our character. So long as we feel that we are separate, useless, here for no reason, so long will our lives continue to be aimless.

I think the greatest help we can mete out to those who are suffering and lost and sad is to show them that they are wanted, that every one is really necessary, nay more, that the world cannot progress to its fullness unless *all* are helping. Despair comes only to those who feel themselves of no use. It is a mighty thought of hope and enlightenment to feel that God in all His Glory and Magnitude wants each one of us to make up His whole. To realise this is the first step to Self-dedication. The moment some one wants you, you must respond, this is never failing. It is the "belonging" feel that grips us and makes us feel responsible. Moreover as we evolve, we come to a stage when we know that it is the surest way to help others, to make them also feel that they belong. The more we evolve,

the more this power developes, the power to draw people in, closer, more at one, to work as a whole. It is part of the spirit of Self-dedication. In younger days (younger in evolution) there is a tendency to keep all to yourself, to shut out others, there is a subtle reason for this, and it is worth considering; the beginning of Self-dedication is very half-hearted, it is a selfish process in one sense which is in itself the reverse of dedication. For dedication is something entire. Self-dedication comes step by step, and is worthy only of the name when self is forgotten in work for the Self, and this is not learned in a day nor in a life-time. It hinges on our attitude and outlook on life, and seems to me to evolve in stages very slowly; possibly a good test to apply from time to time is the test of how many chains have we loosened, how many moorings have we been able to cut.

We offer ourselves, we forget the chains, we mean it at the time, but we find ourselves bound, and that we have not the power to offer or to give that which is bound. "Bound by the chain of our sins" puts it crudely but exactly. We have bound ourselves in past lives, and it is only as we free ourselves that we can offer ourselves; this can only be done bit by bit. In our zeal we offer all, we have not really all

to offer, because we have bound up the greatest part of ourselves in the past. What then is the path that leads eventually to Self-dedication? It is the daily constant untying, unbinding, in fact, the freeing of ourselves. In practice, what does that mean? What binds us? Convention, bigotry and prejudice. Convention means bound by a custom for which there is no reason, bigotry means that we impose our thoughts on someone else, prejudice means that we are bound by a judgment which is formed beforehand; besides this, our past karma binds us, family ties, national ties; all this mesh or web has to be broken before self-dedication can be complete. Sometimes bigotry and prejudice are breakable by strong will, determination, constant endeavour; but it is not easy, no struggle to be free is easy.

Our past karma is more difficult to tackle and the only way to meet that is to accept it and learn from it and try our best to make no more bad karma. If we meet it as the inevitable law of action and reaction, it is a better attitude than the idea of haphazard chance. The family ties and what I have called national ties have to be accepted, fulfilled, carried out and not shirked. To shirk means that the obligations are postponed to another life. If you are on the

way to Self-dedication, nothing can be shirked. Everything must be faced. You do not unbind yourself by shirking ; but only by taking hold of the cord and untying the knot. If ill-health is your karma and prevents what you feel is complete self-dedication, it is no use kicking against it. Be sure that it comes as a reaction from your past action, and its lesson has to be learnt. How often in life has illness been a great blessing, a time of rest, a time to rebuild, a time of silence, a time of solitude ; for illness means a death, and each death of any sort means necessarily a rebirth and follows as the night the day.

Self-dedication is a process built up bit by bit slowly, gradually, not complete until it is absolute self-surrender which is another word for self-liberation, and that means a man made perfect, deification. It is a hard process, this severing of chains, this cutting of moorings, for if you have your boat safely tied up even though it be in a stagnant pool and you want to get out of the pool, you do not like to cut the painter, for the boat will then drift into the stream, and where will the stream carry you ? In life, we must cut ourselves adrift and drift for a while alone, unhelped, and watch the stream. While we are drifting, we do not know what we want,

nor where we would land. It is weary process, and the choice lies in our own hands, for it is only by drifting that we learn how to anchor and where. The plunge is big—there are many plunges, each one is big. But as each cord is severed, a plunge has to be taken, and nearly always in the dark; sometimes a gleam helps us. With each plunge we dedicate more and more of self, for with each plunge a part of ourselves goes out, if we were to keep ourselves back, we should not plunge. Every work is begun by a plunge, and every effort needs a plunge, for the more we give of ourselves, the more we shall be able to plunge and go forward.

I once had said to me something that helped me very much, it was something of this sort: The world is full of nonentities, if only people would learn to plunge and do *something, anything*, but go ahead and start *something*. Complete dedication is forgetfulness of self. No longer do you think of I and thou but the *myself* has developed into *we*, and we are part of a whole. We work as one part works in a vast machinery. In the machinery of the world, as in all other machinery, each part is necessary, and each part must be complete and in its place, else it is useless. I cannot do your work, nor

can you do mine. Each has his place ; yet each unit is forgotten in the completion of the whole—that is the idea of self-dedication. We learn this lesson in our games. A man is not a single unit in cricket, but he is part of an eleven. He plays for his side, and never for a moment can he act except for the good of the whole. This is one great use of learning to play games. How great would be our power for unity in the world, if we could carry out the idea of belonging to each other. As a man gives himself in service to the eleven to which he belongs, so should we aim in self-dedication to give ourselves for the good of the whole. When we have learnt this lesson and freed ourselves of the bonds, then comes the next step on the ladder of life, and we are fixed in our one-pointed aim to climb the mountain that leads to the Eternal Heights. I referred to this in Chapter VI.

We have thought and been brought up with the idea that sacrifice means suffering, and out of that has grown the idea in some religions of self-torture, flagellation, etc., as offerings to a God of vengeance who, in that case, would be a God who loved to see peoples suffer. Nothing could be further from the idea of the One who is All Love, All Embracing, than the desire to torture those whom He has brought into being, and in

whom there is a spark of His own Divine Fire. The idea is grotesque. Sacrifice is giving. Is not giving the greatest pleasure in life? The greater the gift, the greater the pleasure. If then we give ourselves, how great the joy! And what greater joy than to pour oneself out in service for the good of humanity.

Maeterlinck's book, *The Bee*, gives us a beautiful thought. The bee sacrifices its life in preparing for the new life that is to be brought forth. We see this constantly in nature. A plant gives out its entire life to produce seed, in preparing for the new life which is to come. In a sense sacrifice is of this nature, for sacrifice in any form gives new life. It is the death of some thing that some thing may live. Death stripped of all its horror in the joy of birth that is to be. Self-dedication is of this nature. It is the beginning of self-sacrifice, elimination of the self, that the Self, the immortal part of us, may be realised. To those who are awakened to the glory of sacrifice let not a day pass, there is no time to be lost, for in the purpose of the world's evolution all hands are needed. The world at the moment is in the throes of a new birth, an opportunity for all to help, if in the new birth we are to have a

In the war we were more or less awakened by the horrors of the suffering. What are we doing to carry on the work of that lesson offered? The present seems to me to be a time of choice; whether a supreme effort is to be made to go forward, or whether the world is to sink back for a time to a worse state than it was in before. In the first case, we must throw ourselves into the battle, and nothing short of entire Self-dedication to the work will be of use. There is no time for half-heartedness, for the opportunity is unique. It is a wonderful time to live. The world is moving so fast that we find ourselves almost giddy with it, and it is difficult to keep pace with the rapidity of the moves. This is on all sides. Science moves by leaps and bounds, old discoveries are made new by throwing new light on the past; communication all round the world is made easy, and each one is needed to do his best to be his best and to give of his best. To enable him to do his best and to be his best he must start to build good qualities into himself. To give his best is to offer and dedicate himself to the service of the world, which is the service of humanity. What greater joy than to be amongst those who help humanity from the load of misery that weighs so heavy upon it in every country.

We have to learn the great lesson of how to lose touch with the transitory, that which passes, before we can reach the eternal, that which lives. "He that loveth his life shall lose it, but he that loseth his life shall find it unto Life Eternal."

This is the summing-up of the meaning of Self-dedication. You must lose touch with the lower to gain the higher and in the doing of it there is necessarily a plunge. For there is a moment of losing touch, ceasing to touch the lower before the moment comes when the higher can be gained. The moorings must be cut, and there is a moment of uttermost isolation and aloneness, but the Pearl of great price is only found by selling *all that thou hast*.

CHAPTER XV

THE LIGHT IT BRINGS

HOW shall I tell you of the light that Theosophy brings? My tongue is tied, my pen cannot describe it, would that I were free in spirit to fly and whisper it to you, but I am but an ordinary creature, and have to use a wooden pen that writes in a wooden style. You must read between the lines, you must use your imagination and read what I mean behind the crude words that I have to use. If you can do that part then I may be of some little use to you.

I questioned, why the suffering? Theosophy answers with that wonderful law of cause and effect, action and reaction, and by doing so shows us plainly that according to what we do now shall our future be foreordained. The future rests therefore in our hands, as the present is the outcome of the past, made by ourselves. I questioned how? And Theosophy propounds the inevitable law of reincarnation,

of rebirth, of the continuity of life, how Life is all one, that a spark of Divine Fire reigns in each one of us.

I questioned the problems of life, why one appears to have all suffering and a "hard lot" and another a soft bed and everything apparently made easy for him. The Divine Wisdom knows no injustice, only inevitable, unchanging law, the same for all, no favourites, no good or bad chance, no "luck," good or ill, just a law—as a man sows so shall he reap—no getting away from it, no bribes at the gate, no tipping will evade the law; as he has sown so he must reap, a sure and certain consequence not to be carried out in one life but possibly in many; a law which can never be evaded, for the hour must strike when the debt of Karma must be paid.

In the early part of his life when man had just individualised, he did not know these laws and he heaped up many debts almost, if not wholly, unconsciously, as a young man may be foolish in his youth on the physical plane and waste his youth in frivolous or riotous living and even pile up debts in more ways than one. In one sense, it is the same and payment must be made in either case. It is a good law, we are all under it, no need for the questionings of why ill-health? Why deformed bodies? Why

pain of mind, of soul, of body? We all have to learn what is use and what is misuse of all our faculties, of all our vehicles. We all learn through pain and mistakes, it seems, that as we are at present constituted, those are the only ways by which we can be wakened, the only way to make us think of others, the only way that makes us realise the futility of the pleasures of this world and the reality of the Eternal Life.

Theosophy makes one feel so safe, no speculation needed or allowed, no chances, but a sure, inevitable law which centres in ourselves; we ourselves are part of that law, or should I rather say come under it and in that sense are part of it? If we go against it, we break, the law remains; if we work with it, all goes well. Everything that does not go well is caused by going against the law of God.

Theosophy brings with it a sense of happiness and shows how useless is the folly of worry; no worry ever put a thing right, but often worry has killed out the possibility of seeing clearly to help to put the thing right. Worry can never help. Theosophy helps us with control of thought and warns us that if we let a thought get the better of us we are thereby mastered by it, and instead of controlling our thoughts, we are enslaved by them. This is the case with

thoughts of worry, we surround ourselves with them, they recur again and again until we are in a net-work of worry from which it is very difficult to extricate ourselves. Thought controls actions, and if we would control our actions we must start by controlling our thoughts. In these articles we have not attempted to deal with the method of controlling thought, but have only referred to it in passing, and we further refer you to many books on the subject in Theosophical literature. I think among the many important points upon which Theosophy brings light perhaps this is one of the most important, for unless we can gain control of thought we cannot gain complete control of speech or action, and control of mind is behind all these. The mind must be our servant, the servant of the ego, else is it of little use. We might go further and say that it is worse than useless, for an uncontrolled servant is liable to run away with us and run us off the lines. The fact is we have to get control into the right hands, and the right hands are those of the Higher Self. With most of us the control is in the hands of the lower self and we shut out the Higher.

I spoke in a previous article of how the living hope of future lives, implanted by Theosophy,

absolutely and entirely did away with the fear of death, looking upon it as on any other change for development or progress, like passing into another room to take an inventory there when we have finished taking the inventory in the last room. The inventory, we may say, represents experience and it is our part to be careful that nothing in that inventory is left out, else when we have finished taking stock we shall find our list not complete, and we shall have to go over the left out articles again, for our work must be complete, nothing can be left slipshod.

To some of us the greatest revelation was the attitude that Theosophy held to all religions. Theosophy does not take us away from any religion but throws light on all; all religions are contained in the Divine Wisdom, it cannot be *anti* one and *pro* another, for all have come from the same source; the fundamental truths in each religion are the same, but each religion has become narrowed. As a rule, the older the religion is the narrower and the more obscure has it become and sometimes very depraved; outer forms covering up the realities until it has become more and more difficult to extricate and restore the truths underlying them. All religions have their home in Theosophy, for

Theosophy belongs to all, else is it not the Divine Wisdom.

Theosophy can never be parochial or narrow, nothing can be outside it for the Divine Wisdom is of God who is Omnipotent. He permeates everything, nothing then can be outside His Wisdom. No religion can be shut out, none belittled, none better or worse, each in its place as required in its own period of time. Each sent out from the same Source, presented to the world by a Great World-Teacher in its own appointed time, to a certain set of people or nations, and each with a special keynote that was of vital importance at the time. We might compare all religions to the colour of the spectrum or to the different notes in the octave of the scale, each separate in its own colour or sound but part of a whole, a complement of the other colours or sounds. The Divine Wisdom cannot ignore any revelation that works for the upliftment of humanity, it could not say that one is superior or inferior for many revelations are needed. Many rays of the sun are necessary to warm the whole.

Theosophy shows us the many-sidedness of Truth, how impossible it is, for us in our littleness and with our limited vision, to grasp the vastness of Truth. Each religion has thought

it had the whole truth and that the whole had been revealed to it and to it alone, some religions have even claimed this; to a certain extent many individuals think the same, but it cannot be so in our state of evolution. We see but one glint of the whole and think we have it all; we are not able to grasp the whole, the moment we can we shall be as "Gods knowing good and evil". This takes nothing away from any religion but broadens all, makes of each a completion and part of the others and gives a wider vision and should bring tolerance and brotherhood. In the study of the Divine Wisdom, therefore, we find that each religion has its appointed place in the evolution of the world, none better than another and in a sense none can be compared.

You do not compare the different flowers that spring up in the hayfield, each giving its scent, its radiance or its colour to the whole field; you cannot change the one for the other or put one in another's place. Carry this thought further and you will see that it bears very much on everyday life; with each one of us it is the same, for each is part of a great machinery and no part can do the appointed work of another nor take his place. You cannot change parts in hand-made machinery

for each screw is made to fit into a certain joint. Nor does this take from the value of each in any case, but it does do away with criticism and intolerance, for criticism and intolerance cannot exist the moment you acknowledge that each has his place, his own work to do, and none knows the exact work of the other nor the difficulties of his place, whether this be in the great matter of a religion or in the lesser matter of an individual. Theosophy, therefore, I have said, makes one feel so safe, everything in its place according to law and the law in God's hands, under His direction, maintained and upheld by Him, unalterable.

It is the all-embracingness of Theosophy that draws one to it, in fact, it is too big for most of us; we would like to limit it, happily we cannot, we, in our littleness, cannot limit that Wisdom which is from the Divine. It is so full of commonsense, a doctrine of commonsense we might say, simple in its presentation, profound in its truth, so easy to understand and yet so difficult to grasp in its vastness, so practical in details and limitless in its far-reachingness.

The Divine Wisdom makes you know God, it brings Him close, it shows you how far He must extend, it points to Him within you and makes you realise that He is in everything without

you. It brings His greatness down to our own littleness and it raises the smallest to be a part of Himself; it represents Him as omnipotent, omnipresent, but it reminds us that all are His care and that no detail is too small for His consciousness to contact. It brings you in touch with Him in the field, in the wood, in the heart of the tree, in the humming of the bee, in the cottage, palace, prison, stall. Theosophy makes you feel that He is at one with the sick and at one with the vigorous, that He takes part and comes with you into darkness and is near you in aloneness. "I am the gambling of the cheat, the Splendour of splendid things." "The laughter as well as the tears are His, and to the Fullness of His Being the one is as necessary as the other."

Theosophy shows us that we cannot judge for another, that to attempt to do so is futile, for we can only know a tiny part. We are too complex for any to judge, each influenced by past ties, past lives. Who then knows sufficient to judge. Only He, whose Love is boundless, has love enough to understand, for with Infinite Love comes Infinite Wisdom. Criticism, intolerance and the judging of others is the bane of the world to-day and the greatest barrier to peace and to brotherhood.

It is difficult not to criticise the actions and doings of others, yet what fools we are to attempt it since we know nothing of each other; yet we are ever at it.

Theosophy points out to us the widest tolerance and charity for it shows how little it matters what another believes or where he was born or to what nation or sect he belongs; the only things that matter are: what life does he lead, what effect has he on those around him, what are his ideals?

I have spoken of Theosophy as a gospel of hope; it is also a gospel of fearlessness and of love. Fearlessness because it teaches that we should seek knowledge so as to understand for ourselves, that nothing is too sacred to be looked into and enquired into, for only so can we learn. It shows that nothing can touch the pure in heart, that criticism and calumny cannot touch those who have caught sight of the open gate and are struggling to find the straight road that leads right up to it and seeking the password by which they will gain admission.

There are many big problems before us to-day that we shall have to face. The investigation of some of these problems will call for those who are lion-hearted to come to the front, for those who will stand on Christ's side and say:

“Neither do I condemn thee.” Christ was called the friend of publicans and sinners because He understood and had width of vision. In our condemnation to-day let us remember this picture, for to understand is more than wisdom and we can only understand if we have knowledge coupled with wisdom. Great changes are taking place in our midst, under our eyes, and in studying some of these present-day problems it means we must study the history of the past so as to intuite something of the line of progress that the human race may take. In all progress, there is of necessity change. Theosophy throws light on many problems. Do not let us allow prejudice or anything else to come in the way of these rays of light.

To gain vision we must prize the gift of open eyes using them to watch the signs of the times, which signs are showing very specially now in many directions. They show not only specially but rapidly, and we need all our senses and faculties to be severely sharpened so that we may keep pace and be fearless. Theosophy bids us ponder, learn, understand, contemplate and go forward. There is no standing still, those who cannot go forward now, must drop out. This means that they cannot go forward with those who, as it were, are in the upper part of the

school, it is as if we were all up for examination, some pass but some have to come up again for examination later, they do not go forward now in life's school.

The study of the past teaches us to keep our minds open and the happenings of to-day need open minds; there is so much going on that we do not understand and are afraid to look into, but we are children in life's pathway, so cannot we say with the children, "when I am grown up I shall understand," and suspend judgment?

The fact is our old ideas have to be scrapped now-a-days. Are we bold enough to do that and start afresh with clear and open minds?

It is only *ourselves* then that can hinder us, it is *ourselves* that bind us, and prevent us from accomplishing that which our Higher Selves desire.

A continual warfare we may say, only the warfare is within. The warfare is the God within seeking to expand and the lower self desires Him to remain unheeded.

We have all faced, possibly many times, the loneliness of life, when everything seemed gone, everything that we thought of value or that we prized seemed turned to dross. Theosophy points out the things that live, the things that are worth while, and that the aloneness is only

a passing phase, to be gone through and faced because only in solitude shall we learn of the Self. Nothing can touch us from without for we are the rulers of ourselves, God reigning within us.

In sorrow Theosophy has brought to me the balm of hope and taken away the cruel sense of injustice ; in joy it has made me feel an extended joy in sharing it with you ; in pain it has pointed the finger to suffering humanity and has made me feel ecstasy in the knowledge that through my pain I am being moulded so that I may one day be able to share the pain of others ; in weariness it has given me renewed life pointing out that weariness is of the body, the Spirit can never tire. Above all, it gives me that joy in the sense of belonging to God and God belonging to me and in me, and I belonging to all mankind, part of them and they part of me, a true brotherhood, so close that nothing can really permanently divide, and a Love that is unspeakable overshadowing all.

I said that Theosophy was a Gospel of Love, but when I come to this point my pen fails me. A faint reflection, very faint, generally very blurred, but the gem is to be discovered among the ashes, as the pearl of great price, is the human love that binds, that joins together, that vivifies

the two that meet, a faint reflection, I say, of that Love which knows no separation which burns alive in the words "I and my Father are one". In a brotherhood what one brother suffers all suffer with him; if one rejoices, all rejoice, that is the law, for we are all members of the world brotherhood, though we may only be beginning to learn what that membership means. If we had grasped it, quarrels would cease and wars would be no more. Theosophy points the way as nothing else does, for in its many-sidedness it appeals to all who take the trouble to study it; it makes eternal life so certain, other worlds so near, and it brings God into the midst of us. It takes away barriers, it tears down veils and we see before us by its light a panorama of life which knows no doubt, no injustice, for it is a panorama of an overshadowing Love within a changeless Law for all.

Hope can never die to the Theosophist, hope can never be lost. It shows us God everywhere and bids us seek Him in all and reminds us that as His spark is in all life so all life is part of Him and reigns within each human heart. In so far as He reigns in each, is each equal, and all are precious to Him seeing they are a part of Him.

Could any philosophy or religion be more beautiful, more life-giving, more inspiring? The

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SKETCHES OF GREAT TRUTHS

world is weeping to-day and the hope that Theosophy brings can dry her tears. Many have lost faith; the truths of Theosophy can rekindle that faith for she asks no one to leave his religion but helps him to live it and aids in the endeavour to uncover the hidden truths in every religion.

No true Theosophist can be a coward, how can your courage fail if you believe that God reigns in each one of us. Are we not then able to be all powerful, to conquer everything if so be we live up to what we profess to believe? For if God reigns within us what should our lives be? The Light of His Presence should shine before men. Let us then go forward with this fact as a living reality in our hearts, it will change the whole world to us. Instead of letting the lower self dominate we can, under the banner of this great Truth, conquer all that is small and petty and turn out all that is unworthy of the presence of Him who would reign.

We are free, we can choose, there is no compulsion, every time Theosophy is put before us it is an opportunity to further knowledge and more light, a way to freedom from our lower selves and a signpost to the Mountain of the Eternal Heart of the world.

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